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CONSERVATIVE JUDICIAL ACTIVISM?
ROBERT F. NAGEL

AN AMERICAN GIRLHOOD

A memoir of Jeane Kirkpatrick's early years

17 months old, Duncan, Oklahoma

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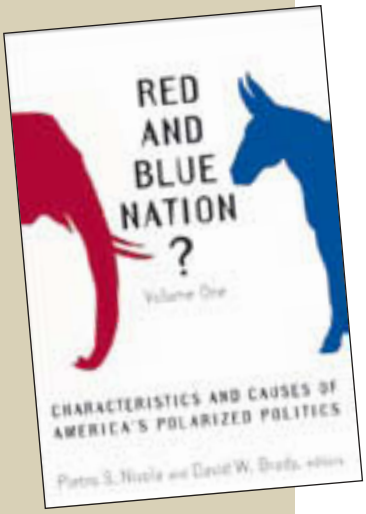
Critical Readings from Hoover Institution Fellows



Red and Blue Nation?

Characteristics and Causes of America's Polarized Politics

EDITED BY PIETRO S. NIVOLA AND DAVID W. BRADY

Analysts and pundits increasingly perceive a widening gulf between "red states" and "blue states." Yet the research to support that perception is scattered and sometimes difficult to parse. America's polarized politics, it is said, poses fundamental dangers for democratic and accountable government. Heightened partisanship is thought to degrade deliberation in Congress and threaten the integrity of other institutions, from the courts to the media. But how deep do the country's political divisions actually run? Are they truly wreaking havoc on the social fabric? Has America become a house divided? This important new book, *Red and Blue Nation?* gets to the bottom of this perplexing issue.

The first of two volumes cosponsored by Brookings and the Hoover Institution carefully considers the extent to which polarized views among political leaders and activists are reflected in the population at large.

In *Red and Blue Nation?* leading journalists and scholars combine their different insights to enrich our understanding of the issue, offering thoughtful analyses of the underlying problems. This comprehensive and accessible discussion of the polarization debate will be an essential resource for policymakers, scholars, and anyone interested in the health of American public discourse.

Brookings Institution Press
250 pages 0-815-76083-3 $22.95 paper
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White Guilt

How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era

SHELBY STEELE

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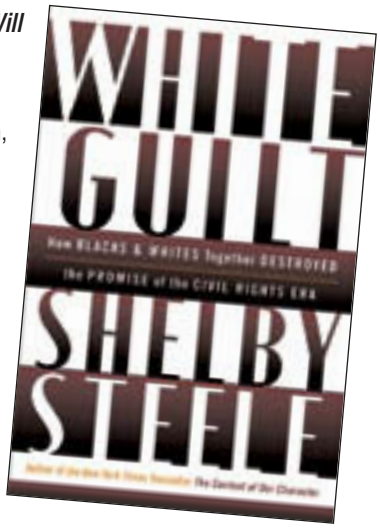
— George F. Will



In 1955 the murderers of Emmett Till, a black Mississippi youth, were acquitted of their crime, undoubtedly because they were white. Forty years later, O. J. Simpson, whom many thought would be found guilty of murder by virtue of the DNA evidence against him, went free after his attorney portrayed him as a victim of racism. Clearly, a sea change has taken place in American culture, but how did it happen? In this important new work, distinguished race relations scholar Shelby Steele argues that the age of white supremacy has given way to an age of white guilt—and neither that has been good for African Americans.

Shelby Steele is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

Harper Collins Publishers
192 pages 0-06-057862-9 $24.95 Hardcover
May 2006
www.harpercollins.com
212-207-7000

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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This barber knows his cutting-edge automotive technology

I'm Henry Besanceney, the only barber in Honeoye Falls, a small town in upstate New York. When you have GM's top scientists in your chair like I do, you get to know a lot about the newest cutting edge technologies. A whole lot. I've learned they're engineering the first drivable hydrogen fuel cell by-wire powertrains. It's an innovation that will outperform today's engines on cost, power and durability. The only thing missing is the pollutants. That's because the only emission the fuel cells produce is pure, clean water vapor. Now that's refreshing!

They say GM is also employing other renewable fuel technologies in their vehicles, like E-85 ethanol made from corn. You'd have to talk to a barber in Nebraska about that one.

Henry A. Besanceney

Henry Besanceney

GM

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The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of News America Incorporated, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, and fourth week in August) at 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 50108, Boulder, CO 80322-0108. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders and changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 50108, Boulder, CO 80322-0108. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. American Express, Visa/MasterCard payments accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. Copyright 2007, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a registered trademark of News America Incorporated.

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The 'Democrat' Congress

The Scrapbook couldn't help but notice that, in the course of his State of the Union address last week, President Bush congratulated the new "Democrat majority" in Congress, which sat politely if not clamorously in front of him. The Scrapbook wasn't seated in the great chamber of the House of Representatives, to be sure; but when we heard that phrase, we wondered if a ripple of discontent could be felt on the, um, Democratic side.

For this particular mode of description—"Democrat" for "Democratic" party—has the effect of sending certain Democrats into a frenzy. Which, of course, is precisely the point: When Barry Goldwater chose Rep. William E. Miller of New York as his vice-presidential running mate in 1964, he explained his decision to reporters by saying that Miller "drives Lyndon Johnson nuts." Sending Democrats into orbit is an old and honored tradition in Republican politics.

Frankly, The Scrapbook doubts that President Bush meant to do that; but whatever his intention, that is what he succeeded in doing. The next morning, on NPR's "Diane Rehm Show," both the venerable hostess and her two guests—onetime Clinton White House chief of staff John Podesta and former Republican congressman Vin Weber—struggled to explain both the meaning and origin of the rhetorical practice of referring to the Democratic party as the "Democrat" party.

"It's like fingernails on a chalkboard," complained Podesta. Neither he nor Weber nor Diane Rehm herself knew how it started. The *Washington Post* devoted a whole story to the subject—albeit in the Style section—which shed no light on the question. And on CNN, Democratic vulgarian Paul Begala was close to tears of frustration: "It tells you what's in [Bush's] heart," he exclaimed. "It tells you that he has no damn desire to compromise."

At which point, we realized that we had arrived at what educators call a Teachable Moment, for the invention of the "Democrat" party seems to have fallen down the Washington memory hole, which is not very deep. To the best of The Scrapbook's knowledge—which is pretty good, but not infallible—the phrase originated with Leonard W. Hall, a onetime Republican congressman from New York and chairman of the Republican National Committee during Dwight D. Eisenhower's first term in the White House (1953-57). It was Hall's intention to suggest that (a) the Democrats, the party of urban machines and union bosses, were not especially "democratic," and that (b) innocent schoolchildren should not confuse the adjective "democratic" with the Democratic party.

In his effort to tease the Democrats of the Adlai Stevenson era, Len Hall, who died in 1979, seems to have succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. The phrase is still routinely used by politicians and speechwriters, and is even, unwittingly, employed by journalists—of the TV variety, that is, including the BBC. To which The Scrapbook, in the fullness of time, says: Enough is enough. The phrase is not just ungrammatical but, at this late date, slightly juvenile and mildly insulting, too. Just the sort of thing, in other words, we would expect from the *Post* Style section or Paul Begala. ♦

Lucky Louie Returns

The Scrapbook let out a chuckle last week when we read in the *Washington Post* that Sheldon G. Adelson—chairman of the Las Vegas Sands Corporation and casino mogul—had written a $1 million check to former speaker of the House and potential Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich's new 527 group. Not because of any hypocrisy on Gingrich's part, mind you. The ex-speaker has never been a vocal opponent of gambling, nor has he ever opposed 527 groups, which can raise and spend unlimited amounts of money. No, we were chuckling because *Post* reporter John Solomon trotted out the Reverend Lou Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, to scold Gingrich for accepting the casino money. "The problem is the income comes from what we call a vice, and that is an issue," said Sheldon.

Thing is, this seems to have become an issue for Sheldon only recently. Here is a passage from another *Washington Post* story, on October 16, 2005, entitled "How a Lobbyist Stacked the Deck." The article, written by Pulitzer-Prize winners Susan Schmidt and James Grimaldi, tells how crooked lobbyist Jack Abramoff shamelessly hired conservative antigambling groups to defeat an Internet gambling ban that would have put his client, eLottery, out of business. (The groups' ostensible complaint was that the bill failed to ban *all* gambling.) How did Abramoff pay those groups? With money from eLottery. One of the recipients was none other than Lou Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition. Write Schmidt and Grimaldi:

> Abramoff had teamed up with Sheldon before on issues affecting his clients. Because of their previous success, Abramoff called Sheldon "Luckie Louie," former associates said. . . . Abramoff asked eLottery to write a check in June 2000 to Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition (TVC).

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Sheldon held a personal meeting with then-majority whip Tom DeLay of Texas. The meeting helped convince DeLay that the Internet gambling bill should be defeated. This more or less killed the bill. Schmidt and Grimaldi continue:

> The eLottery team was euphoric. Abramoff lobbyist Patrick Pizzella, who was in the Capitol to watch the vote, wrote in an email to colleagues the next day that he saw Sheldon celebrating the victory, too. "There was lucky Louie out front hi-fiving with some lobbyists," said Pizzella.

For the record, Sheldon told Schmidt and Grimaldi that he doesn't remember much about the 2000 campaign against the Internet gambling ban, nor does he remember getting the $25,000 check from eLottery. We're betting, though, that he still remembers the old saying that hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue. ♦

Those 'New York Money People'

At the "packed-to-the-rafters" brunch prior to Nancy Pelosi's swearing-in as speaker of the House, blogger Arianna Huffington ran into former NATO supreme commander and Democratic presidential candidate Gen. Wesley Clark, who, Huffington writes, was "really angry" about something Arnaud de Borchgrave had written. The de Borchgrave article in question, which "Clark quickly forwarded to my BlackBerry from his Treo," was about former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's support for American military strikes against Iranian nuclear facilities.

"How can you talk about bombing a country when you won't even talk to them?" Clark told Huffington. "It's outrageous. We're the United States of America; we don't do that. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying the military option is off the table—but diplomacy is not what Jim Baker says it is. It's not, What will it take for you boys to support us on Iraq? It's sitting down for a couple of days and talking about our families and our hopes, and building relationships."

And why did Clark think a U.S. attack on Iran was a certainty? "You just have to read what's in the Israeli press," Clark said. "The Jewish community is divided but there is so much pressure being channeled from the New York money people to the office seekers."

Hmm. Gen. Clark, we should note, is considering another run for the Oval Office. If he keeps sounding like the *Al-Ahram* editorial page, however, we'd say the odds are vanishingly small that he'll ever get to sit down with Ahmadinejad to talk about their families, their hopes, and their relationships. ♦

Except for Bush, Clinton, Carter, LBJ . . .

A startling political aperçu from the dean of the Columbia Journalism School: "The South's political differentness, racial in origin if not in explicit content, has been an impediment to presidential ambition."

Nicholas Lemann, "What Is the South?" the New Republic, *Jan. 29, 2007.*

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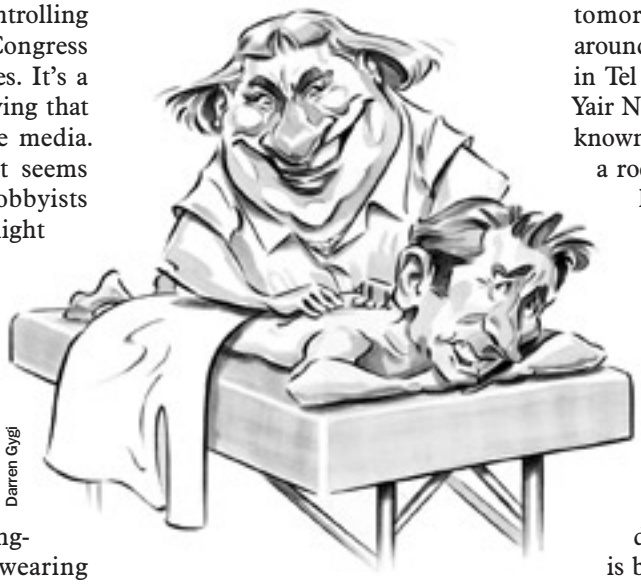
Casual

A Junket to Israel

For independent-minded journalists, there are better ways to see the world than media junkets. But—and my accounting department will back me up here—there aren't many better ways to pay for it. So two weeks ago, I set out for Israel on the dime of the American Israel Education Foundation, affiliated with the American Israel Political Affairs Committee.

Like the Trilateral Commission and Freemasons, AIPAC gets blamed by conspiracy theorists for controlling everything from the U.S. Congress to the price of yak-fat futures. It's a bad rap, and I'm not just saying that because AIPAC controls the media. Based on my experience, it seems that America's pro-Israel lobbyists are, comparatively speaking, light touches. Just look at the competition. The last time our corporate brother at Fox News, Steve Centanni, was hosted by Palestinians in Gaza City, it was after he'd been abducted, forced to convert to Islam at gunpoint, and made to appear in a hostage video singing Allah's praises while wearing fruity pajamas.



Darren Gygi

By contrast, I was put up in hotels with heated pools and kosher sushi bars, given a really cool helicopter ride up the Jordan River, and taken to a Dead Sea spa where large Russian women kneaded our haunches with vise-like fingers still over-exercised from working the plow back in Kostroma. When I asked an Arab affairs correspondent from *Haaretz* how we'd be treated if he brought me down to Gaza to meet his Hamas contacts, he said, "like good barbecue." At the risk of being trivial, here's the score so far: Jews ahead, 40-love.

Israel is a country that turns on tension, since it's never known anything else. If it's not the daily peppering of Islamic Jihad's Qassam rockets or Iranian nutter-butters calling for their obliteration as a state, there's the internal implosions, such as the prime minister being under investigation for sketchy financial dealings, the president being investigated for rape, and a former justice minister being on trial for French-kissing a female soldier. Still, that beats the hell out of last year's war with Lebanon, or "Hezbollahstan" as some call it, when one-sixth of the population summered in bomb shelters. "All told," said an Israeli plane-mate on the ride over, "things are good!"

Here, even the Christians get in on the craziness. Our guide tells us many pilgrims are overcome by "Jerusalem Syndrome," and that, "at least once a year, someone tries to crucify themselves." "How do they manage that?" I ask. "It helps to bring a friend," he says.

Good, clean harmless religious warfare even infects the Judeo-Christian good-times vibe of our group. At the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, six Christian sects are forced to split candle-lighting chores and other upkeep, a rivalry that's resulted in fistfights between monks. As we tour the holy site, my friend and Jewish colleague, *Slate*'s David Plotz, observes, "It takes six churches to manage the place. The Jews could do it with two guys, and they'd hire it out." I tell him not to feel too superior, after all, "we have Mahalia Jackson, you have the *Yentl* soundtrack." True, he says, "but you also have Christian rock."

In spite of the friction, perhaps because of it, Israelis have mastered the art of living and the resigned shrug. They stay up late arguing in restaurants, they sing lustily with house bands in clubs, and they can drink like there's no tomorrow, since tomorrow isn't always a sure bet around here. One night, at a wine bar in Tel Aviv, my dinner companion is Yair Nitzani, a political satirist who is known as Israel's Jon Stewart. He has a rock star's self-assuredness about him, since he used to be one. He played keyboards for a band called T-Slam, and to this day is instantly recognizable as the guy who used to wear a faucet stuck to his forehead. Think Alice Cooper meets early Steve Martin.

He takes a pox-on-all-houses approach to his comedy, which can sometimes be difficult when, say, your cousin is blown up on a bus, as his was a few years ago. "Did that change your viewpoint?" I ask. "Not really," he says. "I wasn't crazy about [the terrorists] beforehand."

With a lasting peace ever-elusive, and the enemy always at the door, Nitzani is a man for whom life is a jump-ball between romanticism and realism. A few days later, after our late night of whiskey and song, the phone rings on our bus on the way up to the Sea of Galilee. It's Nitzani. He leaves a sobering message for me: "Tell Matt to enjoy himself, but not to walk on water. It's not going to work."

Matt Labash

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Cold War Wars

Harvey Klehr's review of my book *How the Cold War Began: The Igor Gouzenko Affair and the Hunt for Soviet Spies* claims that I "misstate key pieces of evidence" and "misunderstand" the threat of Soviet espionage ("Spy vs. Spy," Dec. 18).

My discussion of how the Gouzenko affair was used to stir up a spy mania that resulted in unwarranted violations of individual rights seems especially to rankle Klehr. To buttress his argument that I do not appreciate the seriousness of Soviet spying in America, Klehr writes: "Although she acknowledges that Klaus Fuchs [who passed to the Russians secret information from the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos] was an atomic spy, she absurdly sniffs that there were 'no real atomic secrets to be lost.'" I by no means brush off Fuchs's spying as insignificant: I mention more than once how much Fuchs's information helped the Soviets develop the bomb, and I note that "in comparison with Klaus Fuchs, who was passing valuable information about the American bomb project to the Soviets, the Canadian recruits had much less to offer."

Klehr goes on to assert that "although Knight is aware of the Venona transcripts [Soviet intelligence messages from the 1940s, deciphered by the Americans], she does not have much confidence in what they reveal." In fact, I say explicitly that "Venona was an invaluable tool in the effort to expose Soviet spies. Without Venona . . . the Americans and their allies would not have realized the extent of the Soviet espionage effort."

The problem for Klehr, a firm believer in the infallibility of the Venona documents, is apparently my contention that the Venona messages should be treated with caution because the decrypted texts were often difficult to interpret, and they represented only a small portion of the Russian communications to and from North America. Having pored over the secret messages in Russian that appeared in the newly released Gouzenko materials, I have a new appreciation for how easily these messages might be misconstrued.

Klehr accuses me of ignoring "the detailed information [against Alger Hiss] uncovered by Allen Weinstein" and criticizes me for accepting "at face value the statements of spokesmen for the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) that Alger Hiss's name does not appear in their archives." In fact, I discuss Weinstein's presentation in *The Haunted Wood* of Soviet intelligence messages that supposedly incriminate Hiss. I point out that, in reproducing these documents, obtained by his coauthor Alexander Vassiliev from the SVR archives, Weinstein inserted (against the protestations of Vassiliev) Hiss's name in brackets. As Klehr rightly observes, "the SVR's official policy is not to identify as an agent anyone who has not admitted it himself, including Hiss." The SVR later refused to comment on the insertions of Hiss's name in *The Haunted Wood* documents, except to say that it was "mere guesswork." Weinstein's "guesswork" has been cited again and again by Cold War historians, including Klehr, as a key piece of evidence against Hiss.

Amy Knight
Basel, Switzerland

Harvey Klehr responds: Amy Knight apparently believes what Venona says about Klaus Fuchs and Donald MacLean—both British spies—but she can't bring herself to acknowledge that it also exposed hundreds of Americans who worked for Soviet intelligence. In her letter she admits Fuchs turned over valuable information, but also repeats what I quoted from her book—that there were "no real atomic secrets to be lost." She can't have it both ways.

• • •

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the weekly Standard

Not This Time

No one knows the tragic story of America in Vietnam better than Jim Webb, first as a Marine, then as a writer. So the newly elected Democratic senator from Virginia—a fierce opponent of the war in Iraq—wants to keep Vietnam out of the debate over Iraq. "As much as possible, we need to keep this debate away from Vietnam," Webb said last week. Iraq "is not a parallel situation." But Webb feared that many who supported the Vietnam war, and watched America abandon South Vietnam as it grew close to victory over the Communist forces of North Vietnam, might see similarities.

Indeed, they might, for certain parallels between Iraq and Vietnam are uncanny. A new general, David Petraeus, is taking over in Iraq with a credible new strategy, counterinsurgency. Four decades ago, General Creighton Abrams became the American commander in Vietnam, also with a new strategy. It called for taking and holding the villages and hamlets of South Vietnam. In a word, it was counterinsurgency, and it worked. Now in Iraq, Petraeus has as good a chance of success, starting with the pacification of Baghdad, as Abrams had. And the painful lesson of Vietnam applies in Iraq: Don't give up when victory is at hand.

Those in Congress who advocate retreat in Iraq refuse to acknowledge this lesson. And they may have their way, whatever Petraeus accomplishes. With their calls for troop withdrawals and fund cutoffs and their antiwar resolutions, they have put America on a slippery slope in Iraq. And we know where it leads: to defeat while victory remains quite possible. This happened in six descending steps in Vietnam, and today's coalition in Congress of antiwar Democrats and vacillating Republicans has started pushing us down that dangerous slope.

The first step is, when the war goes poorly, public support falls and politicians dramatically increase their criticism. In Vietnam, this occurred after the Tet offensive in 1968. In Iraq, it occurred gradually at first, then rapidly once violence and chaos in Baghdad flared over the last year.

Step two consists of growing criticism of the foreign government that America is supporting. In Vietnam, the target was the government of President Thieu. In Iraq, it's the elected government of Prime Minister Maliki. Senator Hillary Clinton, for instance, insists Maliki has failed to seek reconciliation between Shia and Sunnis—that is, a political solution. "I do not support cutting funding for American troops, but I do support cutting funding for Iraqi forces if the Iraqi government does not meet set conditions," she said two weeks ago.

The third step involves resolutions and threats. This week, the Senate will take up resolutions opposing the addition of 21,500 troops to Iraq, a buildup Petraeus says is indispensable to his plan to secure Baghdad. If resolutions fail to force President Bush to begin winding down the war, Senator Joe Biden promises the Senate will take stronger measures. In the Vietnam era, congressional critics passed limits on funding.

The fourth step—the one we're approaching now in Iraq—would put restrictions on troop deployments. In 1970, the Cooper-Church amendment sought to bar funding for any American troops in Cambodia, a sanctuary for invading forces from North Vietnam. Today, Hillary Clinton would put a cap on the number of American soldiers in Iraq. Webb, echoing many others in Congress, said withdrawals should begin "in short order."

Step five is the last resort of war opponents: a fund cutoff over the protests of the president. In Vietnam, it came in 1974, after American combat troops had been withdrawn, but with the United States still supporting and funding the South Vietnamese government. What's striking is how much the congressional majority then resembles today's antiwar coalition, mostly Democrats but with more than a handful of Republicans. True, only a minority in Congress favors a cutoff today, but that bloc could grow.

Step six: the collapse. In Southeast Asia, it led to the deaths of more than two million people in Vietnam and Cambodia after the Communist triumph. The members of Congress whose actions prompted the collapse expressed no shame or embarrassment for having betrayed allies. And practically no one held them accountable. Their perfidy was greeted with silence.

In Vietnam, the slide down the slippery slope seemed inevitable. But in Iraq, there's time to halt it. Bush can be expected to hold firm in his pursuit of victory in Iraq. If Petraeus achieves a breakthrough in pacifying Baghdad and then in controlling insurgent-dominated Anbar province, the war opponents must stand down. If they refuse to acknowledge success and cause a repeat of the Vietnam calamity, they should be held accountable. This time, self-inflicted defeat should not be met with silence.

—Fred Barnes, for the Editors

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China Hits Its Target . . .

And it's on West 43rd Street.

BY JAMES OBERG

Two weeks ago, high above eastern Asia, a Chinese missile unerringly hunted down and struck its target. The precision was impressive—and frightening in its strategic cunning.

No, the target wasn't the derelict weather satellite that happened to get blown to smithereens by the missile's impact. More important, the space shot hit home in the editorial offices of the *New York Times*. Responding exactly as could have been expected, the *Times* editors first accused the Bush administration of having "bellicose attitudes" of its own, then urged the administration to sign on to "an arms control treaty for space," which would ban what China had just done.

Not that the *Times* fully comprehended what China had done. The editorial claimed it had destroyed a retired "communications satellite." But the explosion in space destroyed something else, too. An international treaty "banning" space weapons, as the *Times* advocates, would depend crucially on the expectation that, absent effective verification procedures, the parties would be able to trust each other because of a track record of openness and candor. In the aftermath of the secretive Chinese test and official obfuscation at all levels of the Beijing regime, any such hope is as shattered as the ill-fated *Fengyun* weather satellite.

Russia, too, stepped in to demonstrate bluntly the vanity of hopes that transparency and honesty could provide a firm basis for a credible anti-space weapons treaty. Vladimir Putin, visiting India, sniped that China "is not the first country which has conducted such trials. . . . As far as I know, the first such tests were carried out back in the 1980s" by the United States. The Russian defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, declared his doubts that the "alleged test" even occurred. If the Russian president and his top officials cannot speak the truth about decades-old Soviet space weapons or the current Chinese test, how trustworthy have they shown themselves to be about less-verifiable space plans in the future?

If the Russian president and his top officials cannot speak the truth about decades-old Soviet space weapons or the current Chinese test, how trustworthy have they shown themselves to be about less-verifiable future space plans?

In its January 20 editorial, the *Times* adopted a tone of sweet reason: "Surely it would make military and diplomatic sense," the editors urged, "to seek to ban all tests and any use of antisatellite weapons. . . . The way to counter China or any other potentially belligerent space power is through an arms control treaty." Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) agreed: "It is urgent that President Bush move to guarantee … protection [of American satellites] by initiating an international agreement to ban the development, testing, and deployment of space weapons and antisatellite systems." Gary Samore of the Council on Foreign Relations told the *Times*, "It puts pressure on the U.S. to negotiate agreements not to weaponize space." And the *Boston Globe* celebrated the Chinese strike because "it could lead to something positive" since it might persuade the Bush administration to talk about a treaty.

Indeed, China and Russia, along with other nations, have for years been pushing for what they call a "treaty to prevent the deployment of weapons in space." But just as with Abraham Lincoln's famous five-legged dog ("If I call a tail a leg, does a dog have five legs?"), this so-called treaty has no prospect of delivering on its grandiose title.

First of all, there is no accepted definition of what is to be banned. The warhead flown on January 12 had no explosives, and its guidance package probably shared many—if not all—of its components with the rendezvous control hardware being developed for *Shenzhou* manned spaceships, which clearly would *not* be banned. A dozen projects around the world are developing robots to fly to targets in space to inspect and manipulate them (for repair and resupply). Would adding a pair of wire cutters be all that is needed to transform them into "space weapons"? Such a robot could destroy a satellite every bit as effectively as an explosive would.

In a May 22, 2006, working paper at the Conference on Disarmament, Russia and China observed that "no consensus has been reached so far on the definition of 'space weapon'" or even of "outer space." The paper advanced various views, including one that "suggests that there is no need for definitions, on the ground that formulating them is both very difficult and unnecessary. . . . Lengthy discussions on the definition issue might impede reaching a political consensus on the prevention of the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space."

Various definitions are nonetheless suggested for discussion, including one with this curious loophole: "except

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those devices needed by cosmonauts for self-defense." This clause is intended to "grandfather" the one true weapon known to be deployed today in outer space, the survival pistol carried aboard every Russian manned spaceship that docks to the International Space Station. It's a trivial but telling exception—the Russians *have* a weapon in space, and their proposed definition simply dodges the issue by calling the pistol a "nonweapon."

Worse, a slippery slope between military and civilian applications of dual-use technology means that reliable verification of a nonweapons space mission would mean intimate inspection of the hardware and flight plans for every launch. At a recent disarmament conference, Chinese representatives admitted that verification of a space treaty would be "extremely difficult to negotiate." Their recommendation: "For the time being, to put on hold the verification issue until conditions are ripe, and to negotiate a treaty without verification provisions could be a practical alternative." Russian negotiators concurred. "Elaborating the treaty without verification measures, which could be added at a later stage, might be a preferable option," they said.

So the treaty being promoted by the *New York Times* and others—at the instigation of a Chinese missile fired up their backsides—would mean only what each signatory thought it meant. The glaring exception would be in the United States, where a ratified treaty would be subject to federal court enforcement and thus would mean whatever any crusading judge responding to any political pressure group's lawsuits wanted it to mean. A wide range of space projects by NASA, the Defense Department, and other federal agencies could easily be accused of weapons "intentions" and thereby be subjected to delays, disclosures, and legal harassment.

That's not a bad long-range goal from the Chinese strategic point of view. The manipulation of Western media and political forces in that direction, at the point of a space gun, is a good payoff for blowing up one surplus satellite. ♦

Privatize the CIA

Our intelligence community could use more competition. BY MICHAEL RUBIN

Twice this past week, on January 23 and 25, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence held hearings on intelligence reform. Topics included the remaining 9/11 Commission recommendations and efforts both to facilitate information-sharing across the U.S. government's 16 intelligence agencies and to increase the number of operatives and linguists.

The committee's schedule suggests Sen. Jay Rockefeller will use his new majority status and chairmanship to increase oversight and press the Bush administration on matters ranging from CIA rendition programs to the National Security Agency's warrantless surveillance programs. Oversight should be welcome, but neither it nor the 9/11 Commission's recommendations will be enough to rectify the quality of U.S. intelligence analysis.

In a seminal article in the *Economist* in 1955, historian C. Northcote Parkinson described the behavior of bureaucracies. First, he observed, any "official wants to multiply subordinates, not rivals; and [second,] officials make work for each other." He used the British admiralty to illustrate his case. Between 1914 and 1928, its commissioned ships declined two-thirds. Over the same period of time, the number of officials managing them almost doubled.

As John Negroponte prepares to move from the directorship of National Intelligence to Foggy Bottom, it is clear that his legacy falls far short of real reform. He hired 1,500 employees for his new office, but missed recruitment targets for both operatives and analysts.

This is failure. As both the Iranian nuclear drive and al Qaeda's declared war on the United States continue, the nation needs spies to peer where satellites cannot and men on the ground to hear conversations that take place in caves rather than on cell phones. The failure to recruit and retain quality linguists is also a scandal. While Rockefeller criticizes wiretap procedures, the true outrage is the failure of the intelligence and law enforcement communities to put the products of such surveillance to use. On July 27, 2005, Glenn Fine, inspector general for the U.S. Department of Justice, testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that the Federal Bureau of Investigation backlog of counterterrorism and counterintelligence audio surveillance awaiting translation had grown from almost 25,000 hours on December 31, 2003, to more than 38,000 hours on March 31, 2005. Department of Justice sources say the problem has not diminished.

While the number of spies and linguists may be a critical metric for gauging U.S. capabilities, access to raw material does not itself correlate with quality analysis. Here, the intelligence community falls short. Take Larry Johnson, a former CIA and State Department analyst to whom the CIA awarded two Exceptional Performance commendations. On July 10, 2001, Johnson penned a *New York Times* op-ed entitled "The

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Declining Terrorist Threat." As Mohamed Atta and the other 9/11 hijackers conducted dry runs for their attack, and despite Osama bin Laden's 1998 declaration of war on the United States, Johnson argued that Americans were not primary targets of terrorism. He blamed concern about Islamist terrorism on "24-hour broadcast news operations too eager to find a dramatic story line."

While Johnson is just one public example, the poor quality of the CIA's analytical products is an open secret among intelligence consumers. Reports circulated to the State Department, Pentagon, Treasury Department, National Security Council, and the White House are seldom more analytical or detailed than published newspaper accounts.

The reasons for poor analysis are multifold. The initial premise of a closed analytical shop segregated from policy was to maintain a bank of first-rate social scientists to prevent surprise and predict events. But social science has never lived up to its promise. The Soviet Union's collapse and 9/11 are just two prominent instances of the CIA's failure to predict. While it has become fashionable to scapegoat Iraqi National Congress head Ahmad Chalabi for faulty intelligence about Iraqi weapons, and thereby exculpate the CIA's perhaps $30 billion intelligence operation, the preponderance of Langley's analysis suggested Iraq was permeated with chemical and biological munitions.

Nor did Langley ever attract top academics. Many specialists shy away from government careers. In practice—unbelievable as it may seem—travel and regional experience disqualify applicants during the security clearance process. Those with native fluency in languages like Arabic, Persian, or Pashtun seldom pass CIA vetting. While Langley recruits Mormons returning from missions with linguistic ability, most intelligence hires are book smart but experience poor.

As a result, the products of the intelligence community lack both cultural nuance and a feel for personalities. Too many analysts assume that Iranian officials approach diplomacy with the sincerity of their U.S. counterparts; they cannot imagine the prospect that seminary-trained clerics practice religiously sanctioned dissimulation. Hence, many intelligence professionals at the time believed that Iranian president Mohammad Khatami was sincere in his calls for a dialogue of civilizations; now it is apparent that he pursued Iran's covert nuclear program with the same energy as his successor. When European leaders and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright relaxed sanctions and offered an olive branch to Tehran, the Islamic Republic used the resulting hard currency influx to upgrade Iran's military and fuel its covert nuclear program.

Cubicle isolation is also apparent to anyone who knows the people about whom dossiers are compiled. When writing biographies of Iraqi politicians, CIA analysts commonly erred on such basic information as the languages they spoke, let alone their predilections or personalities.

Extreme compartmentalization also reduces the chances for sound comparative analysis. As the CIA has grown, its analysts' areas of responsibility have narrowed. Expertise in arcane subjects should be welcome, but if it comes at the expense of comparative analysis, much can be lost. Analysis of Iranian nuclear capabilities, for example, should not be separated from study of the North Korean ballistic missile program or Pakistani weapons design. Nor should Iran area specialists be segregated from al Qaeda analysts. Rogue regimes and terrorists do not always compartmentalize relationships as neatly as does the U.S. bureaucracy.

The CIA does have many good analysts, but the organizational prioritization of group-think and seniority strangles them. Bureaucratic interests dominate. As reports filter up through multiple levels, officials insert trap-door statements to assert the opposite of any conclusion so that if the report's thrust is wrong, the agency can be absolved of responsibility. A single sentence questioning Saddam's weapons programs, for example, might be buried on page 17 of a report otherwise declaring their existence.

As former CIA operative Reuel Marc Gerecht points out, the formulaic assumption that any watershed event is five-to-ten years away is both the product of caution and a way to avoid acknowledging ignorance. Repeated statements that Iran is five-to-ten years away from autonomous nuclear capability, for example, have become the 21st-century equivalent of the Ten-Year Rule that left Great Britain scrambling to meet the challenge of a resurgent Germany prior to World War II.

Secrecy protects shoddy analysis. Langley may oust analysts for security reasons, but, like any government body, it seldom purges mediocrity. While intelligence analysts conflate questioning with politicization, the desire to avoid inquiry is often a sign of lack of confidence. Analysts who publish openly and under their own names must, for the sake of their reputations, produce solid work or else they will hemorrhage credibility and jeopardize their employment. Too often, though, intelligence briefers cannot answer basic questions. When queries are followed by requests to see raw intelligence, the source material does not always support the proffered conclusions. Intelligence professionals should be able and willing to defend their products.

It is this phenomenon that was at the root of tension between the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence and the Defense Department's Iraq policy shop. The forthcoming report of an investigation by the Pentagon's Office of Inspector General into the Office of Special Plans will absolve the unit of charges that it produced its own intelligence—it did not—but the report may criticize the office for questioning too much the products it received from Langley. But to move toward a standard of blind

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acceptance of intelligence would be both dangerous and wrong.

The traditional value of intelligence products was to provide a baseline of neutral expertise, but the era of an apolitical Langley is over. In November 2005, W. Patrick Lang, former defense intelligence officer for the Middle East, South Asia, and counterterrorism, told the *American Prospect* of CIA analysts' attempts to hurt the White House prior to the 2004 election. "Of course they were leaking," he said. "They told me about it at the time. They thought it was funny. They'd say things like, 'This last thing that came out, surely people will pay attention to that. They won't reelect this man [President Bush].'" Intelligence analysts should not participate in policymaking. Their frequent and as-yet-unplugged leaks may win some short-term policy battles for Langley, but such illegalities have badly damaged trust. To suggest the Directorate of Intelligence is policy-neutral is risible.

So what is the solution? Washington's inclination is always to expand hiring. But that will constrain rather than improve analysis. Today, the CIA's analytical wing is the ultimate expression of Parkinson's Law, rather than a generator of accurate explanation or prediction. Rather than expand, the government should privatize much of its analysis.

Privatization works. Already, Beltway firms like SAIC and Booz Allen Hamilton operate streamlined intelligence shops. Their analysts hold the highest security clearances. So do many think-tank scholars and some university academics. Many private-sector analysts have language abilities and experience their government counterparts lack.

Freeing analysts from some government rules and regulations could improve their products. Not only would it enable outside-of-the-box thinking, but it could also improve access. U.S. government personnel visiting Beirut, let alone Baghdad, must adhere to embassy regulations stipulating intrusive security for travel outside compound walls. Nongovernment employees roam free—or at least set their own rules for security.

Privatization would improve productivity. It can take the CIA hierarchy weeks to sign off on an analyst's report and release it to intelligence consumers across the U.S. government. Private companies react faster. Competition might also expedite exploitation of several million pages of documents seized in Afghanistan and Iraq.

A decade ago, the CIA curtailed its subscriber-based circulation of foreign newspapers and media broadcasts in translation, partly for financial reasons and partly out of misdirected hand-wringing that such products might violate even North Korean and Iranian intellectual property rights. Today, the Open Source Center, the office within the CIA that translates published material, still withholds much of its product from the public. Getting this into the hands of a wider pool of analysts would be in the national interest, even if the analysts offered differing interpretations.

Even with "expedite" orders, whoever wins the presidency in 2008 will have to wait 15 months to staff the National Security Council with new faces unless they already hold clearances.

Expanding the pool of professionals who hold security clearances would have auxiliary benefit. Not only would it enable more opinion and debate without the costs of salary and pension; but, in the long term, it would also erode the clearance lag. Even with "expedite" orders, whoever wins the presidency in 2008 will have to wait 15 months to staff the National Security Council with new faces unless they already hold clearances. At present, the CIA spends hundreds of thousands of dollars to screen and train analysts who may leave government service after only a couple of years. Making it easier for the U.S. government to employ such people would increase return on investment.

There would be drawbacks to more privatization—security and counterintelligence problems would expand—but the risks need not be excessive. Even State Department student interns receive top-secret clearances. Access to government products should still require background checks, security clearance, and the incumbent oaths to protect the material. The FBI and other relevant agencies should nevertheless expand counterintelligence checks. Dissemination of sensitive compartmentalized information like signals and communications intercepts should, of course, remain subject to the presence of adequate facilities to handle and protect the information.

Some outside scholars might also cherry-pick data. But then government intelligence analysts do so now. While data are open to interpretation, competition exposes bad methodology, and ultimately quality shines through. Individual authorship promotes accountability.

Would the CIA's analytical wing disappear? No. But it should shrink, as the pool of outside experts expands. Much of the money allocated for the analytical wing would be better applied to the Directorates of Operations and Science & Technology. Langley and its consumers might maintain yellow pages of analysts by expertise and repositories of finished products. Congressmen could call on individuals to explain their reports or even have multiple specialists debate interpretations. It is not uncommon in, say, the Pentagon for senior leaders to host closed debates among academics and analysts. One thing is certain, though. With threats multiplying, bloat and a culture of job security over performance will neither protect the United States nor promote the serious thinking needed to help it face new challenges. ♦

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Health and Taxes

The Bush plan is good medicine.

BY DAVID GRATZER

When asked by a reporter why he robbed banks, Willie Sutton famously replied: "Because that's where the money is." In the State of the Union address, President George W. Bush focused on domestic policy and, in particular, health care by talking about, not Medicare or Medicaid or health savings accounts, but *taxes*. How to understand the connection? Health care reform must involve tax reform because that's where the money is.

The president proposed ending 60 years of arbitrary tax policy that—by making employer-provided health benefits tax free—punishes the self-employed, rewards society's most affluent, and distorts the entire health care system at a cost of hundreds of billions of dollars to the Treasury. Should Bush's proposal to cap this tax exemption win approval, millions more will have better access to health insurance and 80 percent of workers will get a tax cut. It's the right prescription.

Not everyone sees the tax-health care connection. In the week before the president's speech, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California busily touted his proposal for universal health coverage while his counterpart in Pennsylvania, Ed Rendell, unveiled his own plan. Two separate coalitions of business and union interests held press conferences, announcing proposals to insure the uninsured. On the Hill, congressmen lined up behind two bills with similar aims. And no one mentioned anything about tax policy.

But the tax discussion can't be avoided now that health care is again a big issue. Health insurance premiums have roughly doubled in the past five years and there's no slowdown in sight—which is why the AARP and the Business Roundtable are suddenly holding press conferences together. But only the Bush proposal actually tackles the huge subsidy in the tax code that drives this inflation. For the most part, the other plans offer more subsidies and regulations to save an American health care system drowning in subsidies and regulations.

The president's plan would make health insurance premiums fully tax deductible for individuals, finally putting the self-employed on an even footing with all other Americans. How to pay for this? By capping the tax exemption. Above, say, $15,000 for a taxpayer filing jointly, further employer-provided health benefits would be treated as taxable income, subject to income and payroll taxes. This means that people who now receive gold-plated health plans from their employers would see their taxes go up.

What makes these ideas so sweeping? Consider why most Americans get their health insurance from their place of work. Employer-sponsored health insurance is a quirk of history—companies, of course, don't ordinarily help people with other basic needs, like food, shelter, or clothing. But as an indirect way around wage controls during the Second World War, employers—unable to offer raises—began offering health benefits to attract and retain employees. On October 26, 1943, the IRS ruled that employers could continue to pay health insurance premiums in pre-tax dollars. That ruling legitimized and encouraged the practice Americans now take for granted. After all, if a manager is given a raise of $1,000, he may well take home only $600 (depending on the marginal tax rate); but offer him $1,000 worth of health benefits, and he isn't taxed on them. Not surprisingly, health benefits have evolved to cover massage therapy, marital counseling, sunglasses, and a host of other things that have little to do with health care, strictly defined. The 1943 IRS ruling helped make health benefits a disguised form of income.

Fast forward sixty years, and the result of that ruling is that Americans tend to be insured through their workplace—and overinsured at that. Americans pay just 14 cents out of pocket for every dollar of health care. Carrying so much insurance means that, among other problems, there has been little incentive for people to economize on their health spending.

The tax incentives arbitrarily reward some and punish others. Consider: If a person works for a company that offers health insurance, the premium is paid in pre-tax dollars; if, however, he's a consultant for that company, he must pay significantly more for the identical insurance, because the premium is paid in after-tax dollars. In other words, the 17 million self-employed Americans are penalized under the existing system.

Moreover, for those with employer-sponsored health insurance, the deduction is unlimited, meaning that the more lavish the health plan and the higher the employee's income, the bigger the tax saving. If health benefits were taxed as regular income, the Treasury would take in another $200 billion annually. A quarter of that total goes to people with incomes over $150,000 a year.

The president's plan would tackle both the overinsurance and unfairness problems. He proposes leveling the tax playing field between employers and individuals, by making every-

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one report health benefits as income but allowing some tax deductions. But he'll standardize the deduction, meaning that families whose health premiums are more than 50 percent higher than the average American's would no longer get a free ride on all taxes. Most workers would get a modest tax cut. In short, if President Bush's plan passes Congress, it will partly eliminate the unintended consequence of FDR's wage controls on today's economy. (A more sweeping proposal would have been to end any health premium deductibility—an idea that would be politically dead on arrival.)

But that's a big *if*. Democrats are loath to consider any idea that could be perceived as undermining employer-sponsored health insurance. And Republicans may be reluctant to take on the politically charged task of tax reform.

The White House has been here before, thinking big only to be stopped by the inertia of Congress—and that was before we had a Democratic Congress. Ways and Means chairman Charlie Rangel has called the idea "dangerous."

But the president's position is easily defended, and he has a tactical card to play. Without reapproval, SCHIP (the 1997 state children's health insurance program) ends this year. Democrats are pining to reauthorize the program—which benefits children whose families are too well off for Medicaid. The president can look to cut a deal. Indeed, he can be bold, offering Congress a series of proposals aimed at making health care more accessible: allowing the states greater freedom to innovate with Medicaid (using welfare reform as a model); reducing the cost of health insurance premiums by giving people the ability to shop out-of-state for policies; and expanding health savings accounts, which offer Americans lower-cost coverage.

Republicans—and this president—are rarely excited by health care reform. However, increasingly, Americans are. And the president is right: Health care reform begins with tax reform. It's where the money is. ♦

Mitt Romney's Conversion

His pro-life turn is more recent than you think.

BY JENNIFER RUBIN

Former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney is under fire as he pursues the 2008 Republican presidential nomination. A recent Internet video highlighted comments made during a 1994 debate against Sen. Edward Kennedy in which Romney declared that he supported a "woman's right to choose." Romney quickly distanced himself from those comments, winning praise from conservative pundits. But a look at Romney's second campaign, the 2002 race for Massachusetts governor, reveals that his pro-choice stance and support for embryonic stem cell research were clear and ardent less than five years ago.

In the spring of 2002 Romney completed a Planned Parenthood questionnaire. Signed by Romney and dated April 9, 2002, it contained these responses:

> Do you support the substance of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe* v. *Wade*? YES
>
> Do you support state funding of abortion services through Medicaid for low-income women? YES
>
> In 1998 the FDA approved the first packaging of emergency contraception, also known as the "morning after pill." Emergency contraception is a high dose combination of oral contraceptives that if taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex, can safely prevent a pregnancy from occurring. Do you support efforts to increase access to emergency contraception? YES

Romney also completed the questionnaire of the National Abortion Rights Action League, or NARAL (now called NARAL Pro-Choice America), with this statement:

> I respect and will protect a woman's right to choose. This choice is a deeply personal one. Women should be free to choose based on their own beliefs, not mine and not the government's. The truth is no candidate in the governor's race in either party would deny women abortion rights. So let's end an argument that does not exist and stop these cynical and divisive attacks that are made only for political gain.

As he had with Planned Parenthood, Romney answered "Yes" to questions asking whether he supported *Roe* v. *Wade* and opposed attempts to restrict abortion. After completing the questionnaire, Romney met with three NARAL executives. In this meeting, NARAL executives recount, Romney evidenced no hesitation about his pro-choice views. He also tried to pique the executives' interest in endorsing him by bluntly acknowledging that he had higher political aspirations, saying, "You need someone like me in Washington." Moreover, those present recall that Romney argued that his election would make him credible in the Republican party nationally and thus help "sensible" Republicans like him overshadow more conservative elements in the GOP.

That spring, Romney also personally telephoned the group Republican Majority for Choice and asked for its endorsement. Completing a questionnaire similar to those of other pro-choice groups, Romney got what he wanted from the pro-choice Republicans. His campaign

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trumpeted the endorsement with a press release.

At the Massachusetts GOP convention in April 2002, Romney articulated views entirely consistent with the pledges he had been giving the pro-choice groups. "Believing in people is protecting their freedom to make their own life choices, even if their choice is different from yours," Romney said. "Accordingly, I respect and will fully protect a woman's right to choose. That right is a deeply personal one, and the women of our state should make it based on their beliefs, not mine and not the government's." In much the same manner as he had done in the 1994 Senate debates, Romney repeated his pro-choice views later that year in the October 2002 gubernatorial debates, even invoking his mother, Lenore Romney, who favored abortion rights when she ran for the U.S. Senate in Michigan in 1970.

Romney would later say that his views were evolving at this time and that when pressed he would say he was "personally" pro-life. However, he evidenced no such hesitation when he sought the endorsement of pro-choice groups. To the contrary, he repeatedly tried to reassure pro-choice advocates by stating that he would not alter the "status quo" with regard to abortion laws. He frequently dismissed claims that his pro-choice credentials were inferior to his opponent's. Attempting to dispel doubts about his pro-choice credentials at the 2002 GOP state convention, Romney repeated that any argument that said he was less supportive of a woman's right to choose than others was "cynical and divisive."

In their debate in October 2002, Romney's Democratic opponent Shannon O'Brien said, "It comes down to a matter of trust. I think Ted Kennedy said it best when he was running against Mitt Romney in 1994. His opponent wasn't pro-choice or anti-choice, he was multiple choice."

Whereupon Romney said: "Let me make this very clear: I will preserve and protect a woman's right to choose." O'Brien noted Romney's 1994 endorsement by the pro-life Massachusetts Citizens for Life and mentioned that Romney had written a letter to a Salt Lake City newspaper in 2001 asking that he not be referred to as "pro-choice."

Romney responded that his opponent was "shamelessly trying to play on voter fears about abortion rights." He added that he "do[es] not take the position of a pro-life candidate." Romney's running mate, Kerry Healey, was quoted at the time of the debates as saying: "There isn't a dime of difference between Mitt Romney's position on choice and Shannon O'Brien['s]."

In addition to abortion rights, in 2002 Romney sang the praises of embryonic stem cell research, showing no concern that such research resulted in the destruction of embryos. On June 13, 2002, Romney spoke at a bioethics forum at Brandeis University. In a *Boston Globe* story filed the next day, he was quoted as saying that he endorsed embryonic stem cell research, hoping it would one day cure his wife's multiple sclerosis. And he went on to say: "I am in favor of stem cell research. I will work and fight for stem cell research," before adding, "I'd be happy to talk to [President Bush] about this, though I don't know if I could budge him an inch." When pressed, however, Romney and his aides declined to offer an opinion on "therapeutic" or embryonic cloning.

Romney won the 2002 Massachusetts gubernatorial election by more than 100,000 votes, many from pro-choice supporters. Jennifer Blei Stockman, national co-chair of Republican Majority for Choice, recalls Romney personally calling to thank her group after the election, saying, "We made a difference."

Two years into his governorship, in February 2005, Romney announced his opposition to stem cell research. Then, to the dismay of his pro-choice supporters, he vetoed a July 2005 bill making available Plan B or "morning after" contraception. Also that year, in an op-ed for the *Boston Globe*, he declared himself pro-life.

Romney says he changed his mind in November 2004, when he met with a scientist from the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. Romney claimed in a June 2006 interview that the researcher had told him: "'Look, you don't have to think about this stem cell research as a moral issue, because we kill the embryos after 14 days.'" Romney went on to say that both he and his chief of staff had an epiphany, recognizing that embryonic stem cell research cheapened respect for human life. However, the scientist with whom Romney had met, Dr. Douglas Melton, disputed Romney's story. A spokesman for the institute confirmed Dr. Melton's account, saying, "The words 'kill' and 'killing' are not in Dr. Melton's professional vocabulary, a vocabulary used to discuss finding cures for diseases in order to save lives."

Was Romney an unseasoned politician who changed his views upon deep reflection? Stockman, of Republican Majority for Choice, thinks not. "He was a grown man in 2002 and very thoughtful and introspective," Stockman says, "so the fact that he says he hadn't thought through these issues seems very odd." Melissa Kogut, NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts's executive director, says, "It is conventional wisdom that candidates in Massachusetts need to be pro-choice to win. He ran as pro-choice. As he began exploring the run for president, he changed. No matter where you stand on this issue, you should question where he stands." Angus McQuilken of Planned Parenthood says, "When a candidate or elected official can move so easily from one position to the opposite overnight, it leaves voters wondering whether he has any core values."

Asked recently about Healey's not "a dime of difference" remark during the 2002 campaign, Romney's opponent Shannon O'Brien told me: "Apparently there was a lot more than a dime's worth. Probably enough to put my daughter through college." ♦

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The World of Red Ken

The mayor of London debates Daniel Pipes.

BY JOSEPH LOCONTE

London

The chill wind and cheerless skies didn't discourage thousands of Londoners from trudging to the Queen Elizabeth II conference center on Saturday, January 20, to hear a debate about "the clash of civilizations"—the challenge of militant Islam to the West. The overflow event, sponsored by the city of London, pitted American Middle East scholar Daniel Pipes against the leftist mayor, Ken Livingstone. At another level, it laid bare a massive divide between America and Europe: between those who view Islamic radicalism as an existential threat and those who see a protest movement that can be integrated into democratic societies.

Elected mayor in 2000, "Red Ken" Livingstone has become notorious for his role as London's chief America-basher, Iraq war critic, friend of shadowy Islamists, and apostle of multiculturalism. He played his role flawlessly.

The great problem, he argued, was not Islamic jihad, but its American counterpart. "I think there's a real danger," he warned, "that we could repeat the days at the end of the Second World War." What days does he have in mind? The beginning of American hegemony—Washington's secret plot to dominate the world, which everyone knows set off the Cold War.

Livingstone received rabid applause for the notion that the West, particularly the United States, has invited Muslim rage because of decades of miscreant foreign policy. Worse still, he huffed, America projects a pugnacious, Manichean view of culture and politics. Its militarism toward Islam threatens to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Livingstone's immodest conclusion: "There is no honorable basis for the foreign policy of either the United States or Great Britain."

Government reports suggest that about 3,000 British-born or British-based individuals have passed through al Qaeda training camps.

The mayor's lodestar is multiculturalism, the active accommodation of Islamist values by Western states. He personally flaunts this doctrine, choosing as his debating partner, for example, the Islamist activist Salma Yaqoob. The pairing symbolized the macabre alliance of the political left with militant Islam: Yaqoob, who campaigns on behalf of captured terrorists, belongs to the RESPECT party—founded by George Galloway, the MP expelled from the Labour party after he "incited foreign forces" to attack British troops in Iraq.

Livingstone defended multiculturalism as outreach to moderate Islam. London, he said, is proof that his vision is working: The city boasts more language groups than any in the world, yet remains an exemplar of social integration and civic peace. "I think," he announced, "that we're at the beginning of a global civilization emerging."

Daniel Pipes, whose irenic style could not hide the magnitude of his burden, took Livingstone to task. There is indeed, he said, a fundamental clash—between those who are civilized and those who could be called "ideological barbarians." These modern-day barbarians, Pipes said, are the Muslim radicals who follow in the footsteps of European fascists and Communists. Like them, they seek to dominate through terror; to usher in a utopian vision; and to silence or destroy any murmur of dissent. Multiculturalism is not the remedy for this disease, but rather an enabler. "[Livingstone] wants everyone to get along. I want to defeat a terrible enemy."

Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, was joined by London-based commentator Douglas Murray, author of *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It.* Both argued that, contrary to the portrait of London as an oasis of calm, it has become a nesting place for international terrorism. The 7/7/05 train bombings, the first suicide attacks committed by native Britons against their fellow citizens, only hint at the problem. Britain's toleration of militant preachers—who use mosques and Internet cafés to incite violence—has inspired a vast network of Islamic radicalism.

Government reports suggest that about 3,000 British-born or British-based individuals have passed through al Qaeda training camps, and that at least 16,000 British Muslims are now associated with possible terrorist activity—many based in London. Pipes reminded hecklers that terrorists have carried out, or attempted to carry out, deadly attacks in at least 15 countries. The real danger now, he warned, is that London is exporting its terrorism abroad. "London is posing a threat to the rest of the world," Pipes said. "[Al Qaeda] seeks a cosmic confrontation with the West."

That doesn't seem far off the mark. Last month, the city's Metropolitan

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Police commissioner, Sir Ian Blair, said the terrorist threat level was "of an unparalleled nature"—and growing. Blair cited the desire, and capacity, of terrorists to commit mass atrocities against ordinary citizens. "In terms of civilians, you would have to go back to probably either the Second World War or Cold War for that."

Multicultural policies, Pipes argued, make the problem worse by deepening a sense of alienation. Polls show, for example, that about one in four British Muslims express sympathy for the "feelings and motives" of the 7/7 bombers. A handful of politicians, such as the Labour party's Trevor Phillips, chairman of Britain's Commission for Racial Equity, have, however, pushed back: Phillips made front-page headlines in 2004 when he declared that the U.K.'s entire multicultural project had failed—thanks to its rejection of British values—and should be scrapped. "Shall we kill it off?" he asked. "Yes, let's do that."

Plenty of Londoners agree with him. Judging by their applause and howls of approval, the audience at last week's debate—probably as diverse as any in the city—named Pipes and Murray the victors. Nevertheless, it's doubtful that their arguments are gaining ground among British politicians or voters. Despite Livingstone's rationalizations for Islamist violence and his cozy relations with terrorist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, he was reelected mayor in 2004—and many think he'll win again if he seeks another term.

In addition, last month the Foreign Office instructed cabinet ministers to drop the phrase "war on terror" because it might offend British Muslims. A Foreign Office spokesman defended the action this way: "We tend to emphasize upholding shared values as a means to counter terrorists." And just last week, the director of public prosecutions denied that Britain was in a "war on terror" and called for "legislative restraint" to address terrorist acts.

Just what the "ideological barbarians" were hoping for. ♦

Oy Vey!

Israel contemplates its political leaders.

BY PETER BERKOWITZ

Herzliya Pituach, Israel

Last Wednesday night, beleaguered Prime Minister Ehud Olmert delivered the dinner speech that capped the seventh annual Herzliya Conference on Israel's security. Over the course of four days, more than a thousand leading members of the country's political and intellectual class attended the conference. Rarely had Olmert's audience been as united about national security. Unfortunately for Olmert, their unity embraced the judgment that he—and even more his hapless defense minister, Amir Peretz, as well as Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, an honorable man who only two weeks ago resigned as chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Forces—had proved themselves in the Lebanon war last summer unfit to continue to lead the nation.

The unity also extends to the assessment of the nation's three major national security challenges. The first concerns the Palestinians. Few Israelis believe that much good is likely to come of the three-way talks among the United States, Israel, and Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas proposed by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on her recent trip to Jerusalem. Not that Israelis, including most on the right, are opposed in principle to talking with the Palestinians or doubt that, in the end, final resolution of the conflict requires the establishment of a viable Palestinian state. Rather, a substantial majority of Israelis, including many on the left, have concluded that Abbas is too weak today and cannot deliver on any meaningful promise he might make. Moreover, the military establishment is dominated by the conviction that withdrawal from the West Bank anytime soon would do nothing so much as ensure that Hamas-launched rockets would begin falling on the center of Tel Aviv.

The second challenge involves Hezbollah. To meet it, Israel must learn the proper lessons from the Lebanon war. According to Yitzhak Ben-Israel, a retired major general and the head of the Israel Space Agency, in a technical sense the war cannot be considered a victory. The stated objectives were to rescue the two soldiers taken captive by Hezbollah last July in a cross-border raid (which left eight Israeli soldiers dead); deal Hezbollah a knockout blow by destroying Hassan Nasrallah's fighters and weapons; and enhance Israeli deterrence by showing Israel's enemies that, when roused, Israel will respond with devastating force. Israel met none of these objectives.

There is little serious dispute as to why. It was not, as many in the United States suppose, because Hezbollah's network of tunnels and underground installations and its anti-tank missiles proved too formidable for the IDF. As retired general Amos Yaron, commander of the ground forces in the first Lebanon war in 1982, explained, in that war Fatah had tunnels and underground installations, and in that war Fatah was equipped with anti-tank missiles that, while much more primitive than those used by Hezbollah in 2006, were more effective against Israel's much more primitive 1982 tanks. This did not prevent Israel from achieving, within a few days, its stated goal in June 1982 of pushing the PLO back 25 miles and, within the week, reaching the outskirts of Beirut.

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The failures in Lebanon stem primarily from poor leadership. The prime minister, the defense minister, and the chief of staff were wracked by indecision. They focused too much on casualties and too little on achieving valid military objectives. And budget cuts over the last several years had impelled the IDF to reduce training and stockpiles of equipment.

Yet all this does not mean, as many U.S. critics of the Bush administration are only too delighted to announce, that Israel lost the second Lebanon war.

When pushed, many military analysts acknowledge that Israel's strategic situation in October 2006, after the war, was in critical ways superior to what it had been in June 2006, before the war began.

First, in the early days of the conflict, Israel destroyed most of Hezbollah's intermediate and long-range missiles. Second, Israel destroyed Hezbollah's south Beirut stronghold, including its financial and technical infrastructure. Third, Israel killed roughly a third of Hezbollah's fighting force, about 750 out of a 2,000 to 3,000-man army (while 119 Israeli soldiers were killed). Fourth, the war resulted in the Lebanese army being deployed to the south of the country, bringing that region under the government's control for the first time in more than 30 years. Fifth, the war focused European and American attention on the extent of Iranian influence in Lebanon and Syria. And sixth, the unprecedented statements in the opening days of the war by three pro-American Sunni monarchies—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan—blaming the outbreak of this war not on Israel but on Israel's Arab antagonist, evidenced a momentous transformation in the region. For 60 years the fundamental fault line had run between Israel and the Arabs or Israel and the Palestinians. The second Lebanon war demonstrated that the fundamental fault line had shifted dramatically: It now runs between Sunnis and Shiites, or Sunni Arabs and Shiite Iran.

Indeed, what to do about Israel's third national security challenge—the threat posed by Iran—is on everybody's mind. On Tuesday evening, in a speech to the conference via satellite, Senator John McCain declared that "there is only one thing worse than a military solution, and that's a nuclear armed Iran." Israelis agree. Despite the distance, dispersion, and fortification of the Iranian nuclear program, members of the national security establishment believe that, between submarines, missiles, aircraft, bunker-busting bombs, and intelligence, Israel certainly has the military capability to set back substantially Iran's nuclear weapons program.

As my dinner companion, a former prosecutor in the state attorney's office, put it, "You don't get any credit for giving a speech pointing out that tomorrow the sun will rise in the east."

But what is to be done in the near term? How can Israel take advantage of the growing rift in the Arab world and the receding importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to undermine Hamas, to isolate Hezbollah, and to stop Iran from fomenting terror and becoming a nuclear power?

Prime Minister Olmert's Herzliya address, which focused on the "Iranian threat," provided few concrete answers. It began with the one sentence that drew applause, an assertion that the president of the country, Moshe Katsav—recently informed that the state's attorney intended to indict him for rape and abuse of power based on complaints made by four women—must step down (half an hour before Olmert's speech, Katsav began a rambling, resentful hour-long address broadcast to the nation in which he declared that he would take a leave of absence but would not resign unless formally indicted).

Turning to his evening's subject, Olmert stressed that Iran threatens not only Israel but also the region and the West. The gravity of the threat, he insisted, is recognized in Israel by both the public and politicians. The threat includes Iran's systematic funding of terror—Shiite fighters in Iraq, Shiite Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, and Sunni Hamas in Gaza and the West Bank—and Iran's determination to acquire nuclear weapons, particularly given President Ahmadinejad's vow to wipe Israel off the map. International pressure must be brought to bear, and diplomacy and sanctions may, given Iran's vulnerabilities, prove effective. Although Israel prefers to live in peace with Iran, it is prepared, if all else fails, to defend itself "with all the means at our disposal as necessary." On this matter, Israelis are united. As Olmert put it, "Faced with the Iranian threat, there is not, never was, and will never be any difference between opposition and coalition, between right, center, and left."

Olmert's speech, if devoid of policy specifics and innovations in approach, was a perfectly serviceable affirmation of the Israeli consensus on Iran. But such is the disdain for the prime minister—because of his lackluster performance in the Hezbollah war, because of the collapse of his policy calling for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, and because of the several criminal investigations looming over him—that Israelis were unwilling to cut him any slack. As my dinner companion, a former prosecutor in the state attorney's office and now a distinguished lawyer in private practice, put it a moment after Olmert concluded, "You don't get any credit for giving a speech pointing out that tomorrow the sun will rise in the east."

Perhaps the most immediate national security challenge Israel faces comes from within. It consists in reforming the Israeli political system so that it will raise up leaders of whom the nation can be proud and who can be trusted to refine and carry out the people's will. ♦

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An American Girlhood

A memoir of Jeane Kirkpatrick's early years

EDITORIAL NOTE: Around the time I was starting Encounter Books in 1997, I mentioned to my friend Jim Denton that I thought a memoir by Jeane Kirkpatrick would be an important book. Jim knew Jeane, and he brought the two of us together at a New York restaurant to talk about it.

Jeane listened to my pitch and then said noncommittally that she had considered doing such a book, but didn't have time now because she was just starting a work on foreign policy that might take a while. (It took longer than that: It is only now being published posthumously as *Making War to Keep Peace*.) Fearful that the memoir would wind up in the literary boneyard where good ideas go to die, I argued that it was possible to do both projects at once. I would interview her every so often over the next couple of years while she was completing the other work, and then we would move ahead on the memoir using the syllabus of material I had developed. She examined her fingernails for a long time: one of those gestures that had become iconic on Sunday morning talk shows when she was ambassador to the United Nations in the early '80s. Then, surprisingly, she looked up and said, "Why not?"

So began an odd enterprise, which, although it sometimes resembled stalking on my part and a game of hide-and-seek on hers, eventually resulted in dozens of hours of taped conversations—and the piece that follows, which I drafted a couple of years after we began in order to prove that all the talk would lead somewhere. Many of our chats took place in her office at the American Enterprise Institute. But most of the interviews took place during the summers of 1998 and 1999 at the elegant place Jeane and her late husband Evron Kirkpatrick had reconstructed near the historic town of Les Baux in the south of France.

Perhaps eventually someone will use this rich material to help write the full-dress formal biography Jeane deserves. Until then, we have the following memoir, which would have been the first chapter of the book Jeane and I never completed, and which was seen and approved by the subject herself. Since her death, it has been read by her brother Jerry Jordan and her sons John and Stuart—who also made available the family photographs—and it is published here with their blessing.

—Peter Collier

I keep some of the plaques and awards I've received over the years on the windowsill of my office at the American Enterprise Institute. I know some of them are only casual symbols of the gratitude that flows as a matter of course to people who have spent some time in public service, but they all have meaning for me. One of them I particularly like is a small bronze statuette of Will Rogers set in a base of polished stone given to me by the state of Oklahoma for being a "favorite daughter." There is something about the posture of the figure—feet anchored firmly in the ground, hips thrust forward, chin tucked down in a way that gives the face a "show me" look—that calls up for me a sense of place and belonging. I look at it now and again while I'm writing or talking on the phone and think again how lucky I am to have been born an American, in the heartland of this country, at a time when we had no doubts about our national greatness or our mission.

My father and mother were both Texans whose own parents had farms in the Dallas area. But when my parents came of age, farming was a hard life that was getting harder. In fact, one of my earliest memories is of my father's father, Frank Jordan, shaking his head in that exasperated and pessimistic way of farmers, and saying that if the boll weevils didn't get his cotton, the Johnson grass surely would. It was in part to escape an indenture to

A public memorial service for Jeane Kirkpatrick will be held at the Washington National Cathedral on Tuesday, February 6, at 11 A.M. Please RSVP to vrodman@aei.org *or (202) 862-4870.*

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the land that my father entered the oil business in Duncan, a small Oklahoma town with a western feel, 90 miles south of Oklahoma City and 40 miles north of the Red River. The great Oil Dorado that had once made for boom times and extravagant living in Oklahoma had already peaked, but my father managed to establish himself in the business. Twenty-seven years old when I was born in 1926, he had made his way from roughneck to driller to drilling contractor. The secret of this success was no secret at all. He worked hard, saved his money, and married a good woman.

When I was growing up in Oklahoma, Texas was still our other home—the place we came from and would always be tied to wherever we happened to go. My earliest memories of Texas are Depression memories. Both sides of the family were broke, and it showed, even to a child. Yet the Jordan farm in particular conveyed a sense of plenty in the midst of want. There was always crusty hot bread freshly baked in a big wood stove in the kitchen, sweet butter that had just been churned, fried chicken, tart plum jelly my grandmother had put up the previous summer, and homemade ice cream she turned on the back porch. There was a quilting frame where she worked like Penelope every night. There was sometimes a horse my grandfather let me ride. There were cows, pigs, and chickens running wild. There was church on Sunday at which half the congregation was introduced to me as cousins—second, third, fourth cousins; cousins twice removed; cousins resulting from a variety of matches and mismatches; southern-style cousins.

My mother's side of the family had been in Texas long enough to get tenure. But they were not quite as genetically southern as the Jordans. I knew this because of a photo my maternal grandmother kept of her grandfather, Colonel John Lott of the Indiana Regulars, who had fought for the Union and then migrated to Texas. This grandmother was a tall, straight, strong-bodied woman whom I am said to resemble. I still remember the distinctively tragic look on her face when my grandfather died. I was five and we drove from Duncan to Fort Worth for the funeral, mingling there with all those crying cousins. My grandmother carried on with the fortitude expected of a young widow in those days. And when her other daughter, my mother's sister, died, she took responsibility for raising five grandchildren from ages two to twelve. She was one of those women an extended family learns is wholly dependable and then counts on the rest of her life. When my mother developed rheumatism just after my brother was born, my grandmother came to take her, the new baby, and me to Mineral Wells, Texas, so that my mother could "take the baths." Like my father's mother, she was a great cook and a wonderful seamstress. I have beautiful quilts made by both of my grandmothers—an hourglass, a lone star, a wedding ring, a flower garden, and a Dutch doll quilt that I have given to my first granddaughter.

My grandparents on both sides were sincere Protestants who read the Bible for information on how to conduct their daily lives and did not drink alcoholic beverages, smoke, or play cards. When I was growing up in Oklahoma, there were two major congregations—Southern Baptists and Southern Methodists. In Texas there was a third, the Christian Church, which was the church of Lyndon Johnson and my grandparents.

They were all Democrats, of course. Not just Democrats, but southern Democrats of the yellow dog variety, although my mother modified the old saying ("I'd vote for a yellow dog if he was the Democrat") into something more dignified: She'd vote for the Democrat, she said, unless he was a convicted felon. Frank Jordan, my father's father, had strayed from this commitment as a young man, although it was not much discussed in our family circle. Fearing the economic power of the big banks and the railroads, he had been active as a young man in both the Populist and Socialist parties. But the New Deal had reeled him back in. FDR cemented the allegiance of everyone in my family to the Democrats. As the Depression unleashed economic forces beyond their control, they came to regard programs like the Rural Electrification Program, the CCC, Social Security, and the TVA as godsends and Roosevelt himself as the savior.

As I look back on these forbears of mine, I see them almost cinematically—the passions and turmoil of their individual lives taking place inside the framework of a big country of rangeland and prairie. Indeed, there was one romantic episode in our past that seemed to come right out of the movies. The reason we were in Oklahoma rather than Texas was that my grandfather Frank Jordan had fallen in love with my grandmother when they were teenagers. But her father, a man named Levi Bolles, had already picked out someone else for her, so they had to elope. The night of the elopement, my grandfather brought two horses, but one was a buggy horse my grandmother couldn't ride. So they exchanged it for a saddle horse in Levi Bolles's stable. The next day he accused Frank Jordan of being a horse thief, which was a capital crime in Texas in those days. So Frank and my grandmother kept on going, leaving Kaufman County to ford the Red River and homestead beyond the long arm of the law in what was still Indian Territory. After the first of their eight sons, my father's elder brother, was born, Levi Bolles dropped the charges and became interested in a rapprochement.

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"My happiest memories were of sitting with my mother as she read to me."

Family diplomacy led the newlyweds to make a cautious return to the scene of their amorous crime. It was during a visit to show off their first baby, in fact, that my father was born in Texas.

My father, Welcher F. Jordan, grew up wrestling with Indian boys who lived near the family homestead. (He was named after the last Indian agent in the Territory, a friend of his father's.) Like all of his seven brothers, he was rangy and strong, with some of those qualities I now see in the figure of Will Rogers on my office windowsill. He was a gentleman and a gentle man. Yet there was strength in him that others didn't venture to test. One of the stories I heard from my grandmother about his growing up involved an event in the little one-room schoolhouse near the farm that all the Jordan boys attended. When my father's younger brother Bud was seven or eight years old, the teacher decided Bud needed to be punished for some misdeed. The teacher called him to the front of the schoolroom, turned him over on his knee, and began to hit him hard with a hickory switch. My father's little brother was a strong, stubborn boy, and did not cry. This incensed the teacher, who commanded, "Cry! I'll *make* you cry!" He administered more and harder licks. The blood began to stipple the backs of Bud's legs, although he still didn't cry.

My father, then in the eighth grade, was sitting near the front of the room. When he felt the punishment had gone on too long, he called out to the teacher, "That's enough!" The teacher hit Bud twice more, and the blood flowed down his legs. "I said that's enough!" My father stood. The teacher hit Bud again. My father, who was already tall and strong, threw a thick U.S. history book as hard as he could at the teacher's head, hitting him hard enough to knock him backwards. My father then took Bud home. He was suspended from school but eventually readmitted through the intervention of my grandfather, who was a member of the school board and who, if he hadn't been, probably would have found another nonbureaucratic way of making things right.

My father was an outstanding athlete and got an athletic scholarship to the University of Oklahoma, where he planned to study law. But he broke his leg in a preseason scrimmage. Without football, there was no scholarship, and as money became tight he dropped out and went to work as a laborer in the oil fields.

He met my mother in Fort Worth where she had gone to live with a married sister and to learn shorthand, typing, and bookkeeping. By the time she and my father got together, she was working as a private secretary, an independent woman in the flapper era. They were both 25 when they married. They moved around from one boom town to another in the time before I was born, as my father followed the work. He worked a 12-hour day, seven days a week, a schedule that was common in the oil fields of that period, and he drove an hour each way to work. Obviously, it didn't leave much time for social life, which was concentrated around our family and my father's brothers, who were also working as roughnecks. My mother spent most of her time making good lunches he would carry with him, cooking dinner, and laundering his khaki pants and shirts so they'd be fresh the next day. The oil fields were as wild and woolly as Hollywood depicted them. Against my father's advice, she went with one of his brothers to a local movie house one afternoon and had to hit the floor when two men in the audience decided to shoot it out—there and then.

I never experienced this excitement because by the time I was born, my parents had settled in Duncan, where we lived until I was 12 years old. Duncan was neither wild nor woolly. It had good public schools—and an active public spirit. I inferred a sense of order and of the overwhelming rightness of things from its civic rhythms.

Apparently, I was drawn to books from my earliest years. The first birthday present I remember was a set of nine books, large, well illustrated like an encyclopedia, but containing moral tales and poems for

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older children. I read these books until they came apart. I wanted more. My mother always said I was intensely disappointed when I was only four and not old enough to start school with the older boy next door, and so to stop me from moping around the house, she hired a local woman to give me "expression" lessons. I memorized poems and performed at local affairs. I was teaching myself to read by that time, too, but my happiest memories were of sitting with my mother as she read to me. I learned the Lord's Prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the alphabet forwards and backwards, thus establishing myself beyond question as a promising child. I went to Sunday School at the First Baptist Church from the time I could walk, and accumulated stick-on stars for perfect attendance.

When I was seven, I began piano lessons with Mrs. Thompson. She was a serious woman whose husband, an Indian, didn't like living in town and eventually abandoned her to go back to the reservation. I joined the Schubert Music Club, where we dressed up, studied the lives of composers, and performed for one another. Like all the other piano pupils in Duncan, we played Schubert's "Happy Farmer" as our first recital piece.

I had good friends in the neighborhood and at the school. I think I was a happy child. I know I loved school from the very beginning. I did well and received good grades. My family and teachers alike seemed always to require that I do well but not to make too much of it. It was expected that we should all be "well-rounded," to use a common term of the day, and to be smart without losing ourselves in books. At this last injunction I failed miserably, reading everything I could get my hands on and losing myself in books for weeks on end.

There were many more boys than girls in the neighborhood where we lived. They were my friends. I climbed trees with them, played softball and touch football. Such activities were frowned upon in Duncan for girls. Even as a child, I suppose, I was already engaged in unconventional role behavior.

Indians were important in my childhood, as they had been for my father when he was a boy. (The largest Indian reservation in Oklahoma was only 20 miles away from us.) They were exotic and seemed romantic—symbols of the Vanishing America, which has vanished even more in the years since I was a child. There were always Indians in my classes at school. I collected arrowheads, feathers, and Indian lore, made bows and arrows and beaded things, and imagined myself an Indian girl with shiny black braided hair.

Jews were even more exotic in our town because they were far more rare. There were two Jewish families in Duncan. I have forgotten the name of one of them, a Russian Jewish family whose members had a perpetually worried look on their faces and kept to themselves. But I was close to the Pandries, German Jews who lived across the street from us. Dave Pandrie and I were school and after-school friends. I still remember the day he went to Oklahoma City to be bar mitzvahed. I remember too that his mother made wonderful butter cookies and, in keeping with the stereotype, soothing chicken soup when we were sick.

Blacks were quite another matter. It is conventional to describe the pattern of race relations that existed in Oklahoma as "racial segregation." But the races weren't separated at all. Blacks did live in white neighborhoods—as servants—and took part in almost all aspects of white family life—as servants. The culture that was otherwise democratic, egalitarian, and libertarian was saturated with prejudice against blacks. Words like "nigger-shooter" (for sling-shot) and "nigger toes" (for Brazil nuts) were considered perfectly ordinary, conventional language, like all the other names of things.

I was a child, not a social scientist. I was part of a system of race discrimination without being aware of it. But once I began to see the nature of this system, I understood immediately that it was unfair. That segregation and discrimination violated our basic values was clear to me long before I read Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma*.

Rejecting southern racial practices never led me—as it led some transplanted southerners—to reject southern society and my southern roots. I think southern culture is rich and often textured with a warmth and grace that are absent in the North. Oklahoma, Texas, the Southwest—where my own roots are deep—had in my childhood the strengths of the frontier, which is to say, the strengths of America itself.

A frontier society is open in special ways. It is new—so there was unusual opportunity for individuals to break free of invisible chains and define themselves and make their way. It is mobile—no one was frozen into a role, anyone could be anything they were able to be. It is inclusive—anyone could come. The most remarkable fact about American frontier societies, surely, was that people who found themselves in the same area found it natural to govern themselves by democratic means, by getting together, talking things over, choosing leaders, and working together to provide basic community services.

The creation of small self-governing towns on the frontier was a kind of social miracle re-created every time a new group gathered in a new place and planted a community. In this repeated story was manifest that distinctively American "art of association" which so amazed Tocqueville.

When I spoke at the Oklahoma University com-

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Jeane with her brother Jerry around the time she left for New York

mencement in June 1983 about the United Nations and the intensifying contest between the United States and the Soviet Union, the young man who was class president said to me after I finished, "Mrs. Kirkpatrick, keep up that good Oklahoma way of thinking." I didn't have to ask him what he meant. It was confidence in the American experience and the American approach: standing tall, talking straight, treating others with respect, and accepting nothing less from them. Confronting problems with optimism, initiative, and determination. Accepting a share of responsibility and never, ever, blaming America first.

Two highly dramatic events punctuated my childhood. The first was the birth of a brother when I was eight. It occurred on Thanksgiving Day. My mother was in the hospital, my father at a football game. The aunt who had come to stay with me was in bed with the flu. I celebrated with a ham sandwich at Randall's Drug Store. I was desolate. Who needed a brother anyway? As it turned out, I did. I soon loved this baby very much.

"We are just a family of four," our father used to say, "and we must take care of each other." For us, family loyalty was unquestioning, absolute: It came first. Family loyalty was the first duty; church, community, and country came next. We agreed wholeheartedly with Mark Twain: "Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

My father's creed of family first, last, always, without question or equivocation, did not seem to him incompatible with working a 15-hour day or seven days a week. But this had gradually become impossible in Oklahoma, where the oil fields had been tapped out. There was little or no new exploration or drilling. But there had been a major discovery of oil in southern Illinois, in what came to be known as the tristate field (southern Illinois, Kentucky, and Indiana). The Carter Oil Company, a subsidiary of Standard Oil of Indiana, encouraged my father to buy new drilling rigs suitable for the terrain there. It meant going into debt, which he hated, and leaving Oklahoma, which he dreaded. He hesitated, but, encouraged by my mother, made the decision to go.

Moving from Duncan was the second great event of my youth. I thought I would die. I felt great sadness at the thought of leaving my friends, my school, my piano teacher, my life. I was inconsolable. The assurance of my mother that I would make new friends seemed empty.

We went first to the small town of Vandalia located on the Kaskaskia River. The initial unhappiness and isolation associated with being a new girl in a new town led me to

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rely even more on books for companions. In my memory, the Vandalia Public Library looms as a wonderful haven. It was there I stumbled onto classics: Dickens, Thackeray, Dumas, Victor Hugo, George Eliot, Jane Austen. It was there, too, that I stumbled onto contemporaries: especially Steinbeck, Hemingway, and Saroyan.

It was in Vandalia that I had my first lesson in the sociology of knowledge. Abraham Lincoln had served in the state legislature there, and the town was filled with Civil War memories. (The junior high school I attended was housed in a building that had been a station on the Underground Railroad.) Previously I had studied the Civil War in Oklahoma, at that time the most segregated state in the union. Now I studied it again, and found that it was a different war, fought by different people, for different reasons, with a different outcome.

Seeing the difference between the southern and northern "histories" of this conflict was one of the eye-opening intellectual experiences of my life, and it put me on the road to seeing how important personal perspective is in human understanding, a subject I would continue to pursue throughout my later academic career. It did not lead me to relativism or to the view that no account could be any more accurate than any other, a fatuous cliché in the postmodern university of today. But I saw that perspective is a dimension of a true account and must always be taken into account.

We lived less than two years in Vandalia, which my parents felt lacked good schools and the community spirit of a town like Duncan. By the time we left, I had learned that I could survive in a new environment. I had made new friends just as my mother had predicted. I had found a new piano teacher and begun algebra, learned to dance, and had my first date.

Our next, and as it worked out our final, stop was Mount Vernon, a town of about 15,000 in the part of Illinois known as Little Egypt. It was a progressive town with a great school system overseen by a superintendent, J.L. Buford, who eventually became president of the National Education Association. The high school had a wonderful band and basketball teams and dedicated teachers. I thrived. The journalism teacher, L.R. DeWitt, taught us the fundamentals of writing clear prose and oversaw my work when I became editor of the school newspaper, a weekly called *The Vernon News*.

My parents lived in Mount Vernon until they died (my father in 1973, my mother in 1979). It was the town I went home to during my university years and for nearly 30 years afterwards, when I often took my husband and three sons back with me. I attended my 25th, 30th, and 40th class reunions in Mount Vernon. Every time I return, I feel glad to be there. Yet as a high school graduate I was ready to leave.

My first stop was Stephens College, a rather fashionable two-year college with some of the functions of a finishing school. An unlikely place for a would-be intellectual, Stephens turned out to be an important stepping stone for me. It provided a solid liberal arts base and allowed me to discover that there was a field of human endeavor called philosophy. I read Plato and Aristotle and Hobbes and John Stuart Mill, and I became a Utilitarian. I read Milton, Newman, and Chesterton and became a muscular Christian. I read Dostoyevsky, Woolf, Eliot, and Auden and became a modernist. I read Lippmann, Veblen, Strachey, the Coles, and Marx himself and became a socialist. I made a tenuous effort to take this last exercise in theory into the realm of practice one afternoon when I went with a girlfriend to a socialist picnic. But the day turned into a disaster when a young man who seemed to me to be filled with working-class authenticity took one look at us and asked us nastily if we were "slumming."

It was an exciting time for me. I attended my first ballet, saw my first professional theater, fell in love, fell out of love, recovered, and repeated the cycle. I felt an almost overwhelming sense of being *alive*, of starting to write the plot of my own life. I don't think I had ever consciously felt discriminated against as a girl in growing up, but I always felt that I had to claim vociferously the right to do some of the things I clearly was able to do. At Stephens, I read John Stuart Mill on the subjection of women and Virginia Woolf and Mary Wollstonecraft. I was glad to discover there was a literature and a position to go with my vague feeling that the distribution of privileges and power between the sexes was not quite as symmetrical as it should be.

After my two years at Stephens, I applied to Barnard and was accepted, but without a fellowship, which my father regretted. I was accepted at the University of Chicago, with a fellowship, which pleased my father. So that became my next step. I was so excited that I couldn't wait until September to go there. So I went in June, thinking to enroll for the summer session and get a head start. But things went wrong in Chicago from the beginning. I had trouble getting a place to live, and my mother had to come and help me find a room. I couldn't register because my student file was lost, and naturally when they finally found it all the courses I wanted were filled. The last straw came one evening when I was at a bus stop near a park. Some gang members grabbed me and tried to drag me back into the bushes, but I screamed bloody murder and they left. I decided on the spot that Chicago was not for me and that in any case New York was the right place to pursue the big ideas, as I then thought of them, and it was big ideas that I decided to aim for in my life. ♦

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Conservative Judicial Activism?

Inventing a constitutional right to "medical self-defense"

By Robert F. Nagel

Do you have a bright idea (albeit a controversial one) that you would like to see implemented as national policy? Would you prefer to achieve this without the inconvenience of having to persuade Congress and the president, let alone the American people? Well, here's how to do it.

First, go to law school and afterwards clerk for a justice of the Supreme Court. Then become a professor at a leading law school. Earn the respect of other legal scholars by writing academic articles and books. Gain broader visibility by publishing op-ed pieces and operating a blog. Next, write up your bright idea as an article for an influential law review and get an important think tank to invite prominent legal scholars to discuss your article. Then, wait for some litigators to pick up your idea and hope the Supreme Court will eventually impose it as a requirement of constitutional law. It doesn't always work, but—at least as compared with the options available to most people—it is worth a shot.

This strategy has often been used by left-wing law professors and even by some conservatives. However, with the Court increasingly dominated by the likes of Antonin Scalia and John Roberts, who claim to be committed to judicial restraint, it might seem that clever constitutional arguments are no longer a likely way to influence national policies. UCLA's Eugene Volokh, one of the nation's most prolific and insightful young legal scholars, doesn't think so. And, sadly, he may be right.

Volokh's bright but controversial idea—which is soon to be published in the *Harvard Law Review* and was recently presented at the American Enterprise Institute—is that there is a constitutional right to what he terms "medical self-defense." The basic concept is that the government may not throw substantial obstacles in the path of medical treatments that might protect against death or serious harm. If accepted by the Court, this would mean that the government could not prevent a sick individual from using an experimental drug not yet deemed effective by the Food and Drug Administration. It would also invalidate the federal ban on payments for organ donations. And, of course, it could be applied in any number of other circumstances, limited only by the inventiveness of lawyers and the imagination of judges.

Volokh has a number of reasons for thinking that the Court might be inclined to go down this road. For one, the redoubtable Justice Scalia himself seems attracted to the idea that the right to self-defense (one of Volokh's sources for a right to medical self-defense) has constitutional status. For another, the prestigious Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit has already said that in some circumstances there is a constitutional right to use unapproved drugs. Among those voting for that decision was Judge Douglas Ginsburg, whose right-leaning credentials are attested to by the fact that President Reagan once tried to put him on the Supreme Court. Moreover, the litigation that led to the decision was "spearheaded" (as Volokh puts it) by the Washington Legal Foundation, whose advisory board includes such conservative luminaries as Ted Olson and Ken Starr.

Volokh's hopefulness is based on a deeper consideration as well. He thinks that conservative jurists object to the creation of new constitutional rights when those rights are based on general notions of individual autonomy or, as the Court phrased it in cases protecting abortion and homosexual sodomy, on the "right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." Volokh argues that the right to medical self-defense is based on

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much tighter considerations. Specifically, he points to the Court's decades-long recognition of the right of a woman to terminate her pregnancy, even after the fetus is viable, if her life or health would be endangered by giving birth. He also points to the widespread political acceptance of a right to use lethal self-defense against attackers.

Thus, the proposed right to medical self-defense is said to be based not on unmoored philosophical speculation, but on entrenched political traditions and the judicial precedents that recognize these traditions. Volokh's proposal, therefore, tests whether an increasingly conservative Court might be able to use constitutional interpretation in a creative but constrained and legally justifiable way. If activism is the judicial creation of new rights, Volokh's larger, but implicit, project is to demonstrate that there is a form of conservative activism that is legitimate.

Creative but justifiable conservative activism is an important possibility, embraced by a number of able lawyers and scholars. It deserves careful consideration. Unfortunately, upon examination, Volokh's constitutional argument doesn't look much different from the kinds of fancy shell games that over the years have allowed the Supreme Court to intervene in American politics almost at will.

Notice, first, the obvious: Neither of the legal authorities that Volokh relies on actually establishes a right to medical self-defense. In *Roe* v. *Wade*, the Court did not base the post-viability rights of women on any general right to defend one's life and health. That opinion did not characterize the fetus as a dangerous attacker or explain why a right against physical attack should be extended to protect against the risks of childbirth. Indeed, while the Court did conclude that a state may not prohibit abortion after viability if the life or health of the mother is at risk, the basis for this conclusion is obscure. In effect, the justices simply said that they were balancing the state's interest in protecting potential life against the woman's interest in her life and health. Obviously, in circumstances involving other medical treatments, both the individual's and the state's interests might be thought to be quite different. In short, a specific moral conclusion about the importance of the state's interest in regulating abortion does not necessarily imply a general principle about a right to obtain medical care.

Similarly, the widespread recognition that people should be able to use lethal force to protect against perceived attacks does not mean that American political traditions have protected any right to medical self-defense. Surely it is possible to think that protecting yourself from physical attack is different from protecting yourself from disease. And apparently Americans have recognized such a distinction, since conspicuously absent from Volokh's account of legislative protections for the right to self-defense is any sign that this right has been extended to medical treatment. The problem, in short, is that the only evidence for recognition of a right to medical self-defense as a deeply entrenched political tradition is a dubious Court of Appeals decision and Volokh's gloss on *Roe* v. *Wade*. Even if there were more substantial judicial support for a right to medical self-defense, judicial opinions are supposed to reflect political traditions, not create them.

Professor Volokh recognizes this and makes a number of interesting arguments about why, given what the courts and American political traditions have protected, it would make sense to protect something else, namely a right to medical self-defense. But these are the very kinds of arguments that have long been used to set the courts loose—in the name of what Americans have already decided to value—to force some new view of progress on the nation. If Americans, for example, have rejected seditious libel laws as antithetical to free speech, the Court announced that they must (somehow!) also have rejected the defamation laws that existed in every state. If Americans have a history of honoring the privacy of married couples, the justices decreed that they must also have honored the sexual privacy of the unmarried. And so on.

Volokh is astute enough to know that his arguments are essentially moral claims about what American political traditions should be. He recognizes, therefore, that they might appropriately be aimed at his fellow citizens and their political leaders rather than at judges. He acknowledges that "some" might think that the right to abortion should never have been constitutionalized and should not be extended by analogy. He also concedes that perhaps the right to lethal self-defense should remain what it is, a statutory or common law right, and not be made a constitutional right. Volokh's answer to these "plausible" arguments is simply that "the Court's process for recognizing unenumerated rights by analogy remains active, even for new rights that depart quite substantially from American legal tradition."

Now, this is just not an adequate answer. The fact that the Supreme Court permits, even invites, lawyers to substitute their argumentation for democratic deliberation does not justify the practice. It is not enough to say, "I did it because I could." Volokh and other proponents of judicial activism should face up to what is lost

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when lawyers, law professors, and judges take over public decision-making.

One thing that is lost, as can be seen in Volokh's article itself ("Medical Self-Defense, Prohibited Experimental Therapies, and Payment for Organs," *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 120, April 2007) is a distinctive concept of law and the judicial function. This is partly because no one thinks that far-reaching new rights can be enforced without exception or qualification. Consequently, the standard judicial position is that the government can restrict rights if it has, as Volokh says, "a very good reason to substantially burden the right" and if the restriction is "as narrow as possible." These formulations, as familiar as they are to practicing lawyers, require that judges assess the importance of public purposes and the efficacy of various methods for achieving those purposes. That is, they require that judges make quintessentially legislative judgments.

The upshot is that Volokh's idea would result in what amounts to judicial regulation of the details of medical care and research. Volokh, for example, notes that a right to use experimental drugs might interfere with randomized drug studies because a potential subject could get the drug without entering any study. He admits that this might be a strong enough public concern to justify some limits on the right to medical self-defense but rather casually suggests that courts should permit this purpose to trump the right only when there is an inadequate number of experimental subjects for a specific study.

The *Harvard* article is littered with similar invitations for judges to make legislative judgments. Invalidation of the ban on compensation for organs might encourage the murder of people for their organs, but this risk would justify only rules concerning such matters as where extractions can take place and how consent is obtained. Similarly, the possibility that rich people would buy the available organs can be countered with a rule capping payments at the level that "all funders will pay." The danger that individuals might risk their health because of financial pressure to sell organs can be met, says Volokh, with measures like mandatory counseling and waiting periods. The reasonableness of all these rules would have to be assessed, of course, by judges. Those who think such judicial oversight would be beneficial should ask themselves whether it has been politically healthy for the Supreme Court to oversee all aspects of abortion policy for almost four decades now.

Needless to say, in modern times interventionist courts have not only supervised the details of public policy. They have also taken it upon themselves to make significant determinations about the moral climate of the nation and its various communities. Local governments may not, the Court has decreed repeatedly, restrict vulgar speech in an effort to maintain suitable standards of public discourse. Neither localities nor the Congress may seek to protect a minimal sense of nationhood by prohibiting flag desecration. Creating a society that respects human life is not important enough to justify restraints on abortion in the first two trimesters of pregnancy. It is possible either to agree or disagree with such judgments and still doubt that judges and lawyers, rather than the American people, should decide fundamental questions about the kind of society we should be.

It is on these grounds that the medical self-defense proposal is most disappointing. Volokh does recognize that serious thinkers, such as Leon Kass, have argued that compensation for body parts "is just inherently wrong" because the human body should not be made the subject of commercial transactions. Volokh dispenses with this argument in four brief paragraphs that descend quickly into sarcasm. He writes, "Leon Kass's soul rebels against payment for transplants. My soul rebels against price controls that . . . lead people to die needlessly." How to resolve the conflict between two such spiritual intuitions? Here is where the constitutional status of the right to medical self-defense is so useful as a trump. "Something more demonstrably compelling than Professor Kass's conclusory assertions must be required to substantially burden [a constitutional] right."

This is how lawyers have come to dominate moral debate in the United States. They elevate their preferences to constitutional rights and then claim that profound moral beliefs held by others are inadequate to justify restrictions on the newly created rights. You see, rights cannot be abridged except for highly convincing reasons, and judges (enlightened by the arguments of litigators and law professors) will decide what is convincing.

Creating a constitutional right to medical self-defense would be a definitive sign that the conservatives who sit on the Supreme Court are not serious about establishing a saner, less imperial role for the judiciary—indeed, that just about nobody in the legal profession is. This would be further evidence, if more is needed, that if non-lawyers want to retake control over public decision-making, they should not expect much help from members of the profession whose inordinate power is based on the modern conventions of constitutional argument. ♦

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U.S. Navy bombarding Tripoli, 1804

Close Encounters

American foreign policy at home in the Middle East BY RONALD RADOSH

Michael Oren is known to Americans as the author of the bestselling *Six Days of War*, his account of the Israeli war against the Arab states in 1967. Now he has sought to take on a much wider subject, a broad history of our nation's involvement in the Middle East since 1776. Based on a wide-ranging and impressive use of the major secondary sources and original manuscript collections in the United States, Israel, Turkey, and Great Britain, Oren gives us a study that pulls no punches: a dazzling book that combines amazing stories of long-forgotten players with a subtle analysis of how our American statesmen and leaders made momentous choices in dealing with the region.

Power, Faith, and Fantasy revolves around what Oren terms the central themes surrounding America's involvement in the Middle East, which recur throughout our history. The first is power: military, economic, and diplomatic. The second is faith: the ways in which religion shaped Americans' attitudes and policies. The final theme Oren calls fantasy: the enticing and mythical Middle East beloved by many Americans, whether in books such as *A Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, songs like Maria Muldaur's "Midnight at the Oasis" (1974, written by David Nichtern), or in movies like *Lawrence of Arabia*.

Power, Faith, and Fantasy
America in the Middle East: 1776 to the Present
by Michael B. Oren
Norton, 778 pp., $35

As Oren proves, these themes have persisted through two centuries, and the interplay among them shaped the way Americans responded to the Middle East. In the present day, with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict looming so large, along with the rise of radical Islam, few would question how important the region is to America's well-being. But most Americans are surely unaware of how large the Middle East loomed at the dawn of our nation's development.

Oren starts with the threat posed to the new nation by the Mussulman—as Muslims were then called—as pirates threatened the great profits enjoyed by merchants who traded timber, tobacco, sugar, and rum for Turkish opium, raisins, figs, and other staples of America's export market. Indeed, Oren shows that the very decision of young America's leaders to build a powerful navy came from an inability to respond to the threat without a strong military force.

Americans learned that their ships were being taken and used by enemy forces, their sailors captured and brutalized—and without a way for Americans to respond in kind, aside from payment of tribute and hoping for the best. The new nation's leaders, including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams,

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and George Washington, were forced to confront the threat immediately. Washington felt "the highest disgrace," Oren tells us, at seeing America "become tributary to such banditti who might for half the sum that is paid them be exterminated from the Earth."

Our first president was talking about the Barbary pirates, the name Americans gave to Muslim marauders from Morocco and the Ottoman regencies of Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers. Their incursions led John Adams to try negotiation with a representative of the pasha of Tripoli, to whom Adams offered $200,000 in tribute, hoping that the sum would be less than the risk of losing a million pounds in trade annually. Adams and others were shocked to be told by the pasha's man that the Koran demanded that *all* nations acknowledge Muslim authority, or be faced with the "right and duty to make war upon whoever they could find and to make Slaves of all they could take as prisoners, and that every Mussulman who should be slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise."

By 1790 Thomas Jefferson asked for war to defend America's interests. Rejecting his plea, the Senate allocated $140,000—a gigantic sum for the day—to be used for further ransom and tribute. The United States ended up paying some 20 percent of its annual revenue to the Barbary states. But it was not until the late date of 1801 that new American frigates were sent to blockade the port of Tripoli, the first step in the use of American military power in the Middle East. Bypassing Congress (which he assumed would not vote in favor of war), Jefferson ordered a policing action that was all but war in fact.

This was, Oren points out, "a precedent for future American presidents." The United States did not win at first, but it had taken to heart the advice of our consul in Tunis, William Eaton, who claimed the only language the enemy understood "is terror." Paying tribute only backfired, earning more disdain for America. "Experience," Oren writes, "had taught [Eaton] that in the Middle East power alone was respected and, that in order to gain peace, the United States had no alternative but to wield it." Eventually, the use of power proved to be worth it: It cost over $3 million between 1802 and 1805 to fight the pirates, but it gained world respect for the United States, and reinforced a sense of national pride at home. In 1815 an American fleet sank a large Algerian fighting ship, a step which led to the demise of the Barbary incursions. By 1826, America's 50th birthday, the nation's Mediterranean naval squad was on permanent duty in the Middle East.

Nor was American interest in the Middle East confined to the use of military power. After the soldiers and merchants came men of religion, who sought to gain their own entrée into lands they loved from reading the Bible. Missionaries sought to instill American morals, virtues, and Christianity in a region they considered inhabited by people who practiced a backwards, heathen religion and culture. Some travelers viewed the Middle East through the prism of romance; many would go to find their hopes shattered on arrival. Instead of the romantic, mystical land of literature they had hoped to find, they were chastened to discover a region enveloped by tyranny, poverty, and degradation.

Nevertheless, many Christian missionaries sought to fulfill the biblical injunction by seeking to bring Christianity *and* freedom to the Muslims. Many of these religious pioneers practiced what might be called Christian Zionism, announcing their intent to secure the area of Palestine for the Jews of the Middle East. That goal, the restorationist idea, had penetrated America's mainstream from its start among evangelical churches in colonial America. Their reasons had a particular religious rationale. As Oren explains, American Protestants and evangelists

> held the Jews as their cousins in faith and as the agents of future redemption. By expediting the fulfillment of God's promises to repatriate the Jews to their homeland, Christians could re-create the conditions of Jewish sovereignty that existed in Jesus' time and so set the stage for his reappearance.

It is with amazement that one learns about the attempts of early missionaries to build settlements in the Holy Land, to prepare them for the return of the Jews who had been dispossessed since biblical times. In the 1850s, for example, Walter Dickson sought to establish a colony eventually to be settled by Jews; but Dickson and his family met with failure after a group of Arabs entered their farm and slaughtered the members of his community. Nevertheless, the efforts of these and other Christian settlers led, in the long run, to the creation of lasting institutions, including what would become the American University in Beirut, along with medical facilities that would evolve into great hospitals. Their good works, Oren concludes, helped "lay the foundations of an educational network that would help instill local populations with republican and patriotic ideas."

Thus, it was American Protestants, not Jews, who began to call for an independent, Jewish Palestine. Meeting with Abraham Lincoln in 1863, a Canadian churchman, Henry W. Monk, told the president: "There can be no permanent peace in the world until the civilized nations . . . atone . . . for their two thousand years of persecution [of the Jews] by restoring them to their national home in Palestine." Lincoln responded: "Restoring the Jews to their national home . . . is a noble dream and one shared by many Americans." The restorationist dream was shared by a broad cross-section of the American populace, many of whom actually traveled to Palestine after the end of the Civil War. As the *New York Times* put it: The Jews "certainly deserve Jerusalem."

None of these arguments for a Jewish national home, however, compared to that written by a distinguished professor of Hebrew at New York University in 1844. The professor, another Protestant restorationist who shared the common hope for a Jewish home in Palestine, put it this way in his own volume, *The Valley of Vision: Or, The Dry Bones of Israel Revived*. He denounced the oppression that had for

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so long ground the Jews to dust, and called for "elevating" them "to a rank of honorable repute among the nations of the earth" by creating again a state for them in Jerusalem. That state would be "a link of communication between humanity and God," he wrote, and "blaze in notoriety. It will flash a splendid demonstration upon all kindred and tongues of the truth." (The professor, his work forgotten until Oren rescued him from obscurity, was named George Bush, an ancestor of the two American presidents of the same name!)

Of course, not all Christian evangelicals favored a Jewish home in Palestine, and Oren meticulously traces those Christians and diplomats who strongly opposed it. Elbert Eli Farman, American consul at Alexandria in the 1880s, was sympathetic to native nationalism, which he saw as a justified response to European imperialism. In the 1830s Edward W. Blyden, a black evangelist, encountered Islam as he traveled in West Africa. Showing sympathy with this new religion he encountered, he broke with his evangelical brothers and worked to build ties between Christians and Muslims, crediting Islam with saving native peoples from destruction. And Selah Merrill, a theologian who served as U.S. consul in Jerusalem in the 1880s, opposed the early Zionist settlers, Oren writes, holding "rancor toward Jews and their nascent Zionist movement." A strain in American Protestantism was developing that became strongly antipathetic to the goals of the Christian Zionists.

Woodrow Wilson, a descendant of Presbyterian clergymen, followed in the tradition of his Christian Zionist ancestors. "If ever I have the occasion to help in the restoration of the Jewish people to Palestine, I shall surely do so," he said during his 1912 presidential campaign. With Wilson's backing, Britain assumed its League of Nations mandate over Palestine, issuing the Balfour Declaration that served as a commitment on behalf of Jewish statehood in Palestine. As Oren writes, "Jews throughout the world believed that it could not have been formulated without Wilson's consent." Indeed, so strong was Wilson's belief that he supported the Jewish legion, created by Vladimir Jabotinsky, that enlisted Jews to form a separate legion of the British Army, the first Jewish combat force in 2,000 years, whose members bore the Star of David on its flags and insignia.

Wilson was the first American president to make overt support of Zionism a major focus of American foreign policy. He had promised Justice Louis Brandeis that he would give his support, and in 1918, as war in the Middle East was waning, Wilson fulfilled that promise. On the eve of Rosh Hashanah, he expressed his "satisfaction . . . in the progress of the Zionist movement," as well as his delight in Britain's support of a national home for Jews in Palestine. Wilson did so against the opposition of many of his most trusted advisers, including Secretary of State Robert Lansing and Colonel Edward M. House. "I have a kindly feeling for the Arabs and my influence will be thrown in their direction whenever they are right," said House. Along with industrialists and, in particular, oil men, a faction would emerge that, as Oren puts it, "sought a mutually lucrative alliance between the United States and Arab nationalism." They were quickly joined by State Department career officers, the spiritual descendants of those missionaries who had favored Arab nationalism.

Treaty ending the war with Tripoli

Corbis

Oren makes it clear that it took great courage for Wilson, and later Harry S. Truman, to oppose the naysayers within their own government, and to stand firm against both the Department of State and what would become, in Truman's era, the oil lobby. Disagreeing with those who saw "Arabism as a long-term American interest," Wilson and Truman worked to turn their sympathy with the plight of dispossessed Jews into fervent backing for the cause of a Jewish homeland. Oren shows that Truman, despite buffeting from his own State Department, the British, and from militant Zionists, in the end "supported the right of Jewish refugees to immigrate to Palestine, endorsed partition, and acknowledged Israel's independence."

Colored by his Baptist upbringing, and his own study of the Bible, Truman was committed to spreading democracy in the Middle East, and urged standing "against the vast forces of evil that seek to destroy" America's spiritual values. He sent the Navy to patrol the Eastern Mediterranean, thereby "massively and permanently [projecting American] power into the Middle East." Most important, it was Truman who decided to forge U.S. policy not in terms of protecting oil interests but for the purpose of attaining justice. Like Wilson, Truman resisted powerful advisers and cabinet officers, including Secretary of State George Marshall and Defense Secretary James Forrestal, with his decision to grant recognition to the new state of Israel in 1948.

Throughout the turbulent decades since Truman's decision, America's chief executives have stood with Israel, despite differences in the degree of commitment. In the crises

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that have emerged, Oren shows how events at our nation's very beginning seem to have repeated themselves in a different time and place. Indeed, as Oren concludes, "Americans read about the fighting in Iraq and hear the echoes of the Barbary wars and Operation Torch [when Americans went into action in North Africa during World War II] or follow presidential efforts to mediate between Palestinians and Israelis and see the shadows of Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson."

As for our current commander in chief, Oren contrasts him favorably with his father, a "straitlaced Episcopalian," while the son gravitated toward evangelical churches, whose members had long been sympathetic towards the legacy of the early Christian Zionists. Calling him a true "spiritual heir" of his namesake and ancestor George Bush in 1844, Oren clearly views George W. Bush as a man who has continued in the tradition of those who posted early warnings of the dangers of militant Islam. Oren considers Bush to be solidly in the tradition begun by Woodrow Wilson: of an American policy of standing with Zionism. Yet in contrast to Wilson, who sought to avoid war in the region, Bush was spurred "to decide in favor of war." Oren notes the irony of how, having gone to war to depose Saddam Hussein, the United States found itself isolated from its major European allies, much as those same nations had refused, 200 years ago, to forge an alliance against the Barbary pirates.

Surely, Michael Oren's linking of Bush with the grand tradition enunciated first by Woodrow Wilson will seem controversial. He is fully aware of the problems and dilemmas stemming from the assertion of American power in the Middle East—the many failures despite the best of intentions. Yet, on balance, Oren concludes that this American presence and the exercise of power have "brought far more beneficence than avarice to the Middle East and caused significantly less harm than good." Those who read this magisterial study will find themselves hard-pressed to disagree. ♦

Aging Peter Pans

You'd be surprised by the number of Americans who 'won't grow up.' **BY SUSIE CURRIE**

The week I began reading *Rejuvenile*, a local skateboarder was killed by a car. He was 42. After a moment of silence, it might occur to you to wonder: Just what was he doing cavorting around on four wheels when he could have been behind one? Christopher Noxon may have the answer.

Rejuvenile
Kickball, Cartoons, Cupcakes, and the Reinvention of the American Grownup
by Christopher Noxon
Crown, 288 pp., $23.95

The Los Angeles father of three coined the term "rejuvenile" to describe someone who cultivates the tastes and mindsets of a much younger person. After coming to terms with his own rejuvenile tendencies, which run to cartoons and kickball, he set out to find like-minded souls. He did, in droves: People with graduate degrees playing marbles, video games, and Duck Duck Goose. Those who collect Legos, Barbies, and trading cards as well as a paycheck. Adults with drivers' licenses who love skateboards, skipping, and stickball.

"I came to think of the border between adulthood and childhood as a Cold War checkpoint," he writes, "once spotlit and armed, now unguarded and porous"—an apt analogy, as kids now run toward the door marked Adults Only as fast as their elders are doubling back. (That ground, well-trodden by other writers, is not covered here.)

Noxon asserts that this seismic sociological shift looks as if it's here to stay, and he offers some jaw-dropping statistics as proof. The most watched cable station among 18-to-34 year olds isn't CNN—it's CN, as in Cartoon Network. Americans spend more than $600 billion a year on recreation. Although we're only around 4.5 percent of the world's population, we buy 45 percent of the world's toys. And half of adult visitors to Disneyworld come *without kids*.

Elsewhere, Noxon names the original triumvirate of rejuveniles: J.M. Barrie, Hans Christian Andersen, and Lewis Carroll, born Charles Dodgson, none of whose lives had a storybook ending. But their hold on the public never approached the viselike grip that Walt Disney continues to have. The Magic Kingdom looms so large in the rejuvenile pantheon that it gets its own chapter.

Long thought of as a kids' paradise, Disney's worlds attract grownups by the thousands, and not just for Space Mountain. Fairy Tale Weddings enables actual brides in Cinderella-blue gowns to arrive at the castle in a glass coach pulled by miniature white ponies. (The author leaves us guessing at what the grooms know about all this and when they knew it.) And hey look, there's Groomsman Mickey in the wedding album!

The world of Disnoids—those who visit the park several times a week, or even daily—is a compelling place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there. Consider the childless (oops, child *free*) Ohio couple in their forties who have annual season passes not only to the two stateside Disney wonderlands, but also Tokyo Disney and Euro Disney near Paris, and they spend at least a weekend a month at one of the parks. The wife is president of the 130-member Arielholics

Susie Currie is a writer in Maryland.

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Anonymous, named for Disney's Little Mermaid, and her home is a shrine to the fictional redhead. For some, it seems, golden pins have replaced the golden calf: "I am now complete," asserted the husband, after dropping $100 on a rare Ariel pin.

But Disney addicts, it turns out, are just one of the species in the genus Rejuvenile. Others we meet are the Playalong Parent, for whom playing is an integral part of parenting; the Boomerangs, who share a roof with the 'rents while attending pajama parties with friends from junior high; and a curious category of those who forgo having children so they can spend more time acting like them. Take (please) the married Nevada man who quit his job at IBM to spend more time with his video games and action figures. Now, he's in front of a computer up to 16 hours a day playing various complex games and publishing strategy guides for them.

Corbis / Michael S. Yamashita

Wedded bliss at Tokyo Disneyland

"If I had kids, I'd have to compete with them for all my toys," he explains.

So is this a bad thing? "It's worth noting what we've lost in the process (fedoras were spiffy; civility is always nice)," Noxon admits, "but there's no denying how much freedom adults have gained." St. Augustine defined freedom as the ability to choose the good; now it's the ability to spend your entire paycheck on paintball supplies. But, asserts the author, people playing with toys their peers outgrew, oh, sometime during the Reagan administration is "certainly not a harbinger of the downfall of Western civilization. In its freest forms, it can even approach the profound."

However, that's not the first adjective that springs to mind when meeting most of his subjects. One 25-year-old New Yorker who enjoys Chuck E. Cheese outings, pigtails, coloring books, and stuffed animals says these all point towards a basic philosophy: "No matter what the world throws at me and how many times people disappoint me, I continue to believe that people are good and reliable until they prove otherwise," she explains, inadvertently revealing that she may have watched too many Miss America pageants as an actual child.

The author gamely tries to show both sides of the maturity debate, and claims that the rejuvenile label is intended to be "value neutral." But he tips his hand early on when he sneers at those from the "Harrumphing Codger School of Adulthood," i.e., people who look askance at adults behaving like children. (Among those he fingers as a Codger is Joseph Epstein, whose essay on "The Perpetual Adolescent" appeared in these pages.) Whereas some people might interpret joining an inner-child playgroup as a cry for help, he seems eager to see all but the most obvious slackers through Briar Rose-colored glasses.

Happily, his sympathies don't prevent him from occasionally telling The Rest of The Story. In 1999, one San Francisco woman quit her job in publishing to become a "professional skipper," a movement that, at its height, had "group skips" in 65 cities, he writes. At 35, though, she had mounting debts and no stable job, so she had to go get one. Skipping on sidewalks is one thing, skipping the car payment is another.

Noxon knows his lingo and freely shares it, which makes for a fun read. Kidult, Peterpandemonium, and adultescent are all names for this limbo-like state between adolescence and adulthood that many find (or put) themselves in. "Grays on trays" are snowboarding seniors, and urban hipsters play Parkour, which, for all you frozen-in-amber Codgers, is a daredevil sport that apparently blends the shenanigans of Spiderman and turn-of-the-century street urchins.

One quote from an anthropology professor is telling, and worth more exploration than Noxon gives it. "In most cultural contexts, play prepares children to move into adult roles," says Bryan Page of the University of Miami. "Now the whole thing has been reversed—play is now the primary thing and adult roles and working have become repulsive."

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This is evident in the way several of these adultescents view their own parents, who outrageously modeled self-sacrifice rather than self-actualization. One woman who has "built her life around . . . board games, swing sets [and] amusement parks" remembers with disgust her truck-driving father's mantra: You do what you have to do. "His whole life was about providing and fitting a mold and marching on until it's over. It was really a death march. I never understood that," she told the author, presumably with a straight face.

"They seem unimpressed with the virtues of hardship," Noxon notes. "To them, suffering is vastly overrated"—and, he doesn't add, perhaps underexperienced. "Play, to the modern rejuvenile, is indeed the whole point of life."

If so, might we be forgiven for thinking that if some of these people were any shallower, they'd be the Sahara? I like Play-Doh as much as the next parent, and some of the stories made me smile at recognizing a kindred spirit (for me, it was the roller-coaster aficionado). More often, though, they made my skin crawl: The 33-year-old screenwriter who says her primary relationship is with a stuffed animal that dates from her college years; the 37-year-old Tinkerbell collector who says he spends 90 percent of his free time doing something Disney-related.

Creepiness sometimes spills over into other areas. One Hollywood toy collector, who claims Fred Flintstone and Herman Munster as role models, named his son Damien Hellion. He actively shuns the "adult" label, explaining, "I'm not responsible and I'm not going to be on time and I'm going to come home with chocolate cake on my shirt. I'm gonna miss my gas payments to buy a dirt bike."

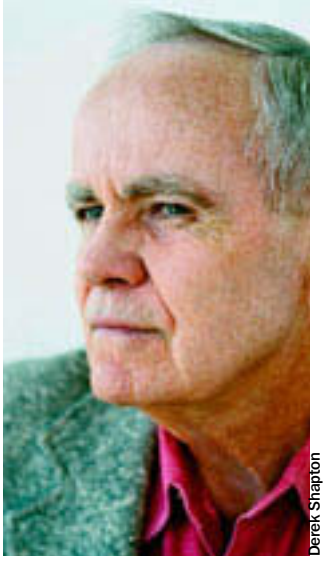
"Any thinking rejuvenile," the author concludes, "can't help but wonder whether his or her dedication to play and love of kid stuff will at some point—if it hasn't already—morph from fun and free-spirited to just plain pathetic." That's a question more than a few of his subjects would do well to ponder. ♦

Life After Death

Cormac McCarthy's post-apocalypse western.

BY SHAWN MACOMBER

In the opening pages of Cormac McCarthy's *All the Pretty Horses*, 16-year-old John Grady Cole sits atop a horse on a backcountry Texas trail mourning his grandfather's death and the cowboy way of life that threatens to die with him: "What [Cole] loved in horses was what he loved in men, the blood and the heat of the blood that ran them. All his reverence and all his fondness and all the leanings of his life were for the ardenthearted and they would always be so and never be otherwise."



Derek Shapton

The Road
by Cormac McCarthy
Knopf, 256 pp., $24

Surveying the *oeuvre* of McCarthy, a similar sentiment could easily be attributed to the author himself, although his is a tough love, indeed. Since the completion of his Border Trilogy—*All the Pretty Horses* (1992), *The Crossing* (1994), and *Cities of the Plain* (1998)—the evolving pastures of McCarthy's imagination have grown more vividly cruel, forcing the ardenthearted to march up to ever-wider cannons' mouths. In *No Country for Old Men*, a small border-town sheriff struggles to come to grips with a hideously violent, radically unmoored culture that has become inscrutable to him in the space of 40 years. "Maybe the next forty of it will bring some of em out from under the ether," he posits after a particularly senseless crime pushes him to retire and leave the conundrum to someone else. "If it ain't too late."

The Road is set several years after an unspecified apocalypse, and it *is* too late. Within its pages the ardenthearted ever have their work cut out for them, and the majestic prose and sprawling asides of McCarthy's earlier work have been scuttled in favor of a more taut, sparse approach, rife with tension and threat. Cannibalistic "bloodcults" roam the "cauterized terrain" that remains of America. Somewhere above the ash stratosphere "a banished sun circles the earth like a grieving mother with a lamp," giving way in the evenings to "blackness to hurt your ears with listening." The remnants of the consumer culture dwindle and the world becomes increasingly less hospitable to life: "The names of things slowly following those things into oblivion. Colors. The names of birds. Things to eat. Finally the names of the things one believed to be true."

All of this McCarthy sums up as "The frailty of everything revealed at last."

Starving, forced to live as prey, an unnamed father and son push a shopping carriage filled with scraps scrounged from the ruins across the wasteland toward the west coast seeking respite from black snows, the hor-

Shawn Macomber is a Phillips Foundation fellow.

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rors of the new world everywhere: Bodies melted into tarmac; a "charred human infant headless and gutted blackening on the spit"; the grisly aftermath of fighting off a bow-and-arrow-wielding madman with a flare gun. The precepts of an effortless middle-class life have been torn away and replaced with a single simple rule: "If trouble comes when you least expect it then maybe the thing to do is always expect it." When the son asks, "What's the bravest thing you ever did?" the father answers, "Getting up this morning."

The only thing more fearsome than everyday living, however, is facing what the end of those days would mean. Flashbacks allude to a family suicide pact only the mother followed through on. Unwilling to allow his son to become a slave or meal (or, most likely, both), the father works to steel himself should he be forced to pull the trigger. He wonders, if the bullets run out, could he muster the fortitude necessary to crush his beloved child's skull with a rock?

Yet even as the world spirals further into *Heart of Darkness* territory, even as they freeze and starve and suffer, he hesitates. "He knew only that the child was his warrant. He said: If he is not the word of God God never spoke." And more: "There were times when he sat watching the boy sleep that he would begin to sob uncontrollably but it wasn't about death. He wasn't sure what it was about but he thought it was about beauty or about goodness."

In contrast, the son displays a staunch ambivalence with regard to his own life. He has no recollection of the world as it was, only as it has become. The occasional unearthed can of Coke or tin of peaches does little to convince him of civilization's onetime greatness. Often as not, he seems to fear his father's resolve to live more than dying. Desperation can lead to inhumanity, and depravity (which he seems intuitively to understand) should be avoided even in a primitive world.

"Are we still the good guys?" the son asks whenever they pilfer food or drive off an attacker.

In order to maintain the boy's will to live, the father must hold to some level of purity and the boy must occasionally compromise and err on the side of survival. It's a perfectly rendered symbiotic relationship. "This is what the good guys do," the father tells the boy. "They keep trying. They don't give up." In seeking to convince the boy of this, he preserves his own soul; and by allowing himself to be convinced, the boy survives.

Of course, to speak such words is not to stave off despair completely. "If only my heart were stone," he laments one night as he watches his son suffer. But it is not. And that is why, despite its constant peripheral horrors, *The Road* is a bleak yet ultimately inspiring tale relaying unmistakable hope for human beings, even if McCarthy's work increasingly shows precious little of the same for humanity.

"People don't feel safe no more," Lacey Rawlins, Cole's compatriot in *All the Pretty Horses*, sighs as the boys naively set off to seek a land where rugged individualism still exists. "We're like the Comanches was two hundred years ago. We don't know what's going to show up here come daylight."

Considering where McCarthy's literary journey has taken him, and his creations over the last decade, it seems safe to say those two boys the author once dreamed up didn't know the half of it. But the heat, and the heat of the blood, that ran them remains very much the same. ♦

First, Do Harm

How campus therapists sabotage their patients.

BY SALLY SATEL

According to a 2004 survey by the American College Health Association, nearly half of all college students report having felt so depressed at school that they have had trouble functioning. The National Survey of Counseling Center Directors revealed last year that nine percent of all students sought help at their college mental health center. Many suffer eating disorders, self-mutilation, binge-drinking, the stress of boyfriends, exams, and broad-spectrum angst.

Unprotected
A Campus Psychiatrist Reveals How Political Correctness in Her Profession Endangers Every Student
by Anonymous, M.D.
Sentinel HC, 224 pp., $23.95

Inevitably, some of these afflicted souls have come to the office of Dr. Anonymous, a psychiatrist who works in the mental health clinic of a large university. They are lucky to have found her, given the bracing level-headedness and compassion she brings to the job.

In this sobering exposé, Dr. A argues that the culture on campus—and in her profession—is so steeped in political correctness that it hamstrings the ability of therapists to help college students. The doctor's frustration steams off every page: "We ask about child abuse, but not last week's hook-ups," she laments. "We want to know how many cigarettes and coffees she's had each day, but not how many abortions in her past. We consider the stress caused by parental expectations and rising tuition, but neglect the anguish of herpes, the hazards of promiscuity, and the looming fertility issues for women who put their career first."

These are just a few of Dr. A's field

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notes, many of them transcribed in the pressured style of someone wailing in the wilderness. Indeed, the book could just as easily have been titled "Diary of a Mad Psychiatrist." It's hard to know how many of Dr. A's colleagues share her perspective, but *Unprotected* suggests that their numbers are dwarfed by purveyors of ideologically correct therapy. "My profession has been hijacked," she complains.

If she is right, it is not surprising. The counseling, psychology, and public health professions have been infiltrated by those who often put their social and political agendas above the needs of their patients. Indeed, campus mental health appears to be yet another stage on which the ethos of the culture wars—victimology, diversity, hostility toward traditional sex roles and family values, and (selective) non-judgmentalism—is playing itself out. But because so much of the action goes on behind the closed doors of therapy sessions, the topic is rarely aired in public.

Dr. A does a graphic job of showing how the campus environment can be a parent's worst nightmare. As an example, she offers an explicit website sponsored by Columbia University's Health Education Program, which provides advice such as "Phone sex: Getting started," "Politics of Group Sex," and "how to clean a leather cat-o-nine tails between uses especially if it drew blood." (Answer: Hydrogen peroxide.)

In the training workshops she attends, Dr. A would like to see less focus on sexual experimentation and social oppression in the counseling of young people and more consideration of meaning, hope, and purpose. "Many would benefit from being less self-absorbed, not more," she says. Indeed, the general sensibility on campus, as the author paints it, is a jumble of mixed messages. It assumes, on one hand, that students will be overwhelmed by news of disaster, such as Hurricane Katrina, but that, on the other, they can breezily handle "hook-ups"—nearly nameless sexual encounters. It urges therapists to ask about a student's sexual preference, but not whether he is a person of faith. The prevailing wisdom says that getting an HIV test is a personal decision to be made "only if you can handle it," while an abortion is something one simply takes in stride.

The folly of the campus "wellness" movement is most dramatically underscored by these inconsistencies. When it comes to actual students, however, the thesis of *Unprotected* would have been more powerful if Dr. A had showed exactly how her fellow therapists have failed them.

For example, she talks about Stacey, a student who contracted HPV, a sexually transmitted disease. The girl was panicked and started cutting her arms to cope with the stress—a troubling scenario, indeed. But how did therapy ill-serve her? Had she been misguided or ill-informed by a prior counselor? It's not clear. Then there is Ned, a devout Christian. While it is true that mental health professionals are a notably secular crowd, we don't hear that the other therapists Ned saw ridiculed him for his beliefs, or tried to persuade him to relinquish his values—though, I confess, it is a scenario one can imagine.

College-bound teens (especially women) and their parents are the target audience here. But *Unprotected* should also be read by student mental health professionals; the leadership of the American Psychological and Psychiatric Associations, respectively; and college administrators. In reading it they will either learn about disturbing "therapeutic" trends they did not know existed—and thereby, one hopes, be moved to do something about them—or be put on notice that the biased milieu they themselves helped foster is being called to account. Or, perhaps, some would recognize themselves in Dr. A and be emboldened to speak out on behalf of students at their schools.

Social trends can be tricky to document, but Dr. A does a good job. She cites peer-reviewed studies of psychologists' political preferences, antireligion commentary contained in psychology textbooks, literature from the American Psychological Association, "educational" websites, chat rooms, and an avalanche of pamphlets available at student health centers. It's not a scientific analysis, but the PC trends are unmistakable. Also, most chapters contain informative and highly readable reviews of relevant topics, such as the epidemiology of AIDS, the biology of STDs, and the dynamics of fertility. (The discussion of protection against HPV, however, seems too negative regarding the value of condoms.)

Some off-notes are struck, however. Dr. A's description of the relationship of well-being to religious activities is a bit muddled. Yes, data reliably show that children who grow up in a religious household, pray, and believe in God are less likely to smoke, use illicit drugs, and have premarital sex than nonobservant peers. But this by no means indicates that troubled students will attain mental health if a therapist directs them to begin attending church or to pray, as she seems to suggest. I also found the tone shrill in places, and I wonder whether Dr. A's obvious personal belief that embracing traditional values of faith and family is essential to leading a rewarding life may undermine her important message for readers who don't share her convictions about how one should live.

These caveats aside, *Unprotected* is a significant exposé. If students are being deprived of understanding and sensitive guidance, or are not given a full picture of the potential consequences of their actions, then campus therapists are woefully derelict, if not professionally negligent.

One last issue deserves consideration: authorship. When I finished *Unprotected*, I thought it was a shame that Anonymous, M.D.—who explains that she used the pseudonym to insulate herself from professional retaliation—didn't bite the bullet and declare her name proudly. In the end, she did. Dr. Miriam Grossman of UCLA came out of the closet on Dr. Laura Schlessinger's radio show this fall. Now that she has laid down the gauntlet, let's hope that similarly concerned professionals come forward to press for balance in the psychological care of college students. ♦

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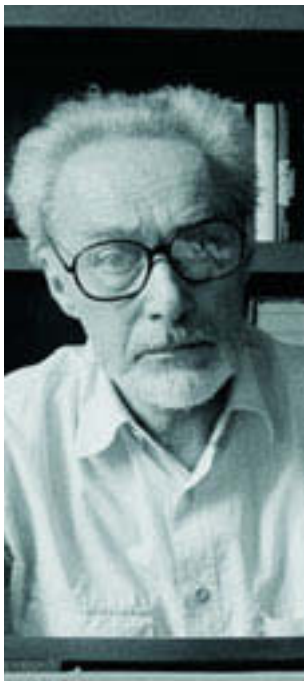
'Ulcer of Memory'

Italy's clinical chronicler of the Holocaust.

BY WALTER REICH

Before he died in 1987 at age 67, almost surely as a suicide, Primo Levi, an Italian Jew, was, alongside Elie Wiesel, one of the great witnesses of Auschwitz. But whereas Wiesel's *Night* was passionate, piercing, moving, and transforming, Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz* was analytical, descriptive, precise, even clinical—and, for generations of readers, no less transforming. Neither memoir could tell the whole story. Together, they bracketed the experience of Jews in that German extermination camp, helped the world begin to penetrate it, and spoke to the heart as well as the mind.

In addition to memoirs and works of fiction, which earned him recognition as one of the great humanists and writers of the last century, Levi, a working chemist for 30 years, published short writings—essays, newspaper columns, introductions to books, including new versions of his own—that were marked by elegance, originality, and startling insights. *The Black Hole of Auschwitz* is a collection, well edited by Marco Belpoliti and gracefully translated by Sharon Wood, of some of these short writings.



Sygma / Corbis / Gianni Giansanti

The Black Hole of Auschwitz
by Primo Levi
Edited by Marco Belpoliti
Translated by Sharon Wood
Polity Press, 240 pp., $23.95

Italy was a home for Jews for over 2,000 years. By 1933, 50,000 of them lived there, most of them highly assimilated but deeply aware of their Jewish identities, customs, and roots. Levi's family, and many other Jewish families in Turin and other Piedmontese cities in northern Italy, traced their origins to Jews who had been expelled from Spain in 1492, as well as to Jews from France.

In 1938, Fascist Italy passed anti-Semitic laws, and in 1940, it entered the Second World War alongside Nazi Germany. After Mussolini was deposed in 1943, Germany occupied the northern and central parts of the country and began rounding up Jews for extermination. It was, in part, because Italian authorities protected Jews that some 40,000 of them survived in that country. Still, the Germans were able to send about 8,000 Italian Jews, as well as 2,000 from Rhodes (then part of Italy), to Auschwitz and other camps. Of these, some 7,600 were murdered.

Levi joined the anti-German resistance in 1943 at age 24. Arrested by Italian Fascists, he admitted being a Jew, was handed over to the Germans, and sent to Auschwitz. Of his convoy of 650, 525 were murdered upon arrival at the camp, 29 women were kept alive for labor, and 96 men, including Levi, were sent to Auschwitz III, also known as Buna or Monowitz, which the Germans had established some three miles from the Auschwitz I camp in order to provide slave labor for the Buna synthetic rubber works. In the end, only about 20 of Levi's convoy survived to return to Italy. Levi himself survived, in part because, with a doctorate in chemistry, he was able to work, during his last months at Buna, in a laboratory in the I.G. Farben factory rather than in the mud and snow.

Even in this small collection, Levi's range is astonishing. He writes on his need to record his experiences and bear witness; on the unique and unsurpassed enormity of Germany's crimes; on the irony that victims and perpetrators belonged, after all, to the same human family; on the fact that the Holocaust demonstrated techniques of destruction that make future genocides more possible; on Jewish resistance in the concentration camps and ghettos despite impossible odds and no hope; on his identification with his fellow Jews from Eastern Europe, whose unique Yiddish voice had been extinguished by the Germans, "the voice of a people weeping for itself"; on the importance of understanding exactly how Auschwitz worked; on the dangers of Holocaust denial and neo-Nazism; on the suicide of other survivors; on the importance of educating the public about the Holocaust; on the "ulcer of memory" that many survivors have needed to repress; on the penchant of human beings, including Nazis, to believe their own propaganda and to lie to themselves; and on the uniqueness, among all the world's evils, of the "black hole of Auschwitz."

Collected together, the short pieces in this small and excellent volume reveal an immensely humane man who rose above rancor, but whose memory burned with a fire that continues to illuminate our dark and bereft planet. ♦

Walter Reich, the Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Professor of International Affairs, Ethics and Human Behavior at George Washington University, and a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center, was director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from 1995 to 1998.

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The Mysterious East

A trio of thrillers set in Laos, Thailand, and Korea.

BY ELLEN BORK

For anyone who enjoys mysteries and thrillers set in foreign countries, Asia offers not only exotic locales but also a bit of mystery-within-the-mystery when the gap in perception between East and West is skillfully handled. Yet many authors can't resist the temptation to rely on stereotypical villains and victims rather than allow the complicated (but subtle) differences to play out. Details, carefully rendered, and a good story give the reader a better sense of the barrier that often confronts a Westerner in Asia than the tired use of outsized themes and cartoon character Americans relied upon by two of these books.

The Coroner's Lunch
by Colin Cotterill
Soho Crime, 272 pp., $24

Bangkok Tattoo
by John Burdett
Knopf, 320 pp., $24

The Door to Bitterness
by Martin Limón
Soho Crime, 280 pp., $23

In *The Coroner's Lunch* by Colin Cotterill, the bodies of the wife of a high Lao official and some unidentified Vietnamese have landed on the autopsy table of Siri Paiboun, an elderly doctor pressed into service as Laos's official coroner after the Communist victory. The septaugenarian Siri has survived the war and lost his one and only love, his committed Communist wife, under mysterious circumstances. At this point, nothing fazes him, not even being visited in his dreams by the spirits of his dead autopsy subjects.

Weaving the spirit world into the story actually works better than some of the other farfetched plotlines: the story has Vietnamese interference, government corruption, and the nefarious activities of a certain foreign intelligence service. Siri is aided by an unlikely and disparate cast of characters that includes an assistant with Down's Syndrome and a pal on the Politburo. Unfortunately, Cotterill, a British social worker, reads more like Barbara Pym than he should. Except for a few mentions of reeducation camps, the reader has little sense of what Laos might have been like in the mid- to late 1970s.

The Bangkok that John Burdett writes about is another story, but you'll feel like you need to take a shower afterward. *Bangkok Tattoo* is Burdett's second novel featuring Sonchai Jitpleecheep, a cop who is the son of an absent American serviceman and a former prostitute, now a Chanel-wearing madam. Confronted with a gruesome murder, and involving the tattoo of the title, Sonchai and his corrupt but benevolent boss Colonel Vikorn have to decide whether to solve the crime or allow the truth to be manipulated by American officials, for their own geostrategic purposes.

The story takes Sonchai to Thailand's unstable, largely Muslim south, a growing terrorism concern that would allow Burdett to describe a complicated blend of government repression, Muslim alienation, and the growing threat of Islamic terrorism. Instead, Burdett can't resist targeting the West, and Americans in particular. Sonchai frequently addresses the reader as "farang," a derogatory term for a white foreigner. The Americans, grotesquely caricatured by Burdett, are consumed with self loathing, while Thai police and army officials engage in an indirect debate about the phony democracy foisted upon them by the West. The plot takes place against the backdrop of Bangkok's famous sex industry, which Burdett uses, along with a moderate Muslim imam, to highlight the self-delusion and soullessness of the West. (An author's note provides a disclaimer that Thailand's sex industry is smaller per capita than in many other countries. In that case, perhaps Burdett, whose first novel played on the Western fascination with Thai transvestites and transsexuals, will pick another aspect of Thai society to explore.)

Prostitution and corruption also pervade Martin Limón's series of gritty detective stories focusing on the misadventures of two American Army crime investigating agents in 1970s Seoul. Limón's lower key approach rings true, however—perhaps because Limón, like his narrator, Agent George Sueño, served in South Korea. For Sueño and his partner Ernie Bascom, the workday includes nights in Itaewon, Seoul's seedy nightlife district for GIs. The two cops encounter the lingering privations of postwar Korea rather than the sunny side of the burgeoning South Korean economic miracle.

In *The Door to Bitterness*, the fourth in the series, Sueño finds himself bereft of his service gun and military ID after an encounter in a bar that he cannot quite remember. Faced with dire disciplinary consequences if these are not recovered, Sueño and Bascom embark on an investigation that takes them south to Inchon and north toward the Demilitarized Zone, finding out along the way what criminal schemes and personal vendettas they have been dragged into.

Limón does well creating the world where the American military comes into contact with life on the margins of postwar South Korea, even if the attempt to bring about redemption for some truly wretched characters is labored. More important, Sueño realizes that the little things a foreigner can easily miss may hold the key to solving crimes, not to mention understanding the locals. ♦

Ellen Bork is deputy executive director at the Project for the New American Century.

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Bad Impressions

Imitation is the sincerest form of campaigning for an Oscar. **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

At the Academy Awards ceremony on February 25, Helen Mirren is all but certain to be named Best Actress for her portrayal of Queen Elizabeth II. Philip Seymour Hoffman, who was last year's Best Actor for his performance as Truman Capote, will present the award to her. Hoffman's successor this year will probably be Forest Whitaker, who plays Idi Amin in *The Last King of Scotland*. Whitaker will receive his prize from Reese Witherspoon, who was honored last year as Best Actress for her depiction of country singer June Carter Cash.

Hoffman was preceded by Jamie Foxx, who took an Oscar in 2005 as Ray Charles. Foxx prevailed over Leonardo DiCaprio's Howard Hughes, Johnny Depp's J.M. Barrie, and Don Cheadle's Paul Rusesabagina (a real-life hotelier in Rwanda). Foxx was handed his statuette by Charlize Theron, who got hers a year earlier for making herself look as ugly as Florida serial killer Aileen Wuornos. Theron followed Nicole Kidman, who nabbed an Oscar as Virginia Woolf. Kidman's fellow Australian Cate Blanchett took Best Supporting Actress honors on the same evening Foxx won his award by sounding and looking just like Katharine Hepburn.

The surest route to winning a performing Oscar in our time isn't to create a detailed fictional character from scratch, to imbue a writer's creation with three-dimensional life. Nor is it to show up without a lot of makeup on, or to have a death scene, or to survive somebody else's death scene. These were the sure bets of previous decades. Rather, these days, the way to the stage at the Kodak Theater is to become an impressionist—to be the kind of performer who converts an actual person into a fictional character.

Impersonation was once considered a lower form of acting, a freakish vaudeville stunt. Impressionists appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* between the animal act and the little Italian puppet in a race car. They recorded comedy albums that, for the most part, didn't sell very well. They played the mountains, opened for Sinatra in Vegas, and sat in one of the lesser corners on *The Hollywood Squares*. They didn't win the most prestigious prize in the world of performance.

There was a reason for the low esteem in which impersonators were once held relative to actors. In the first place, they had something very specific to copy. They could listen to recordings to get a famous person's voice down. They could watch movies and television shows to get the body language down. When they succeeded in getting an impersonation right, it could be dazzling; but it was, in the most basic sense of the word, not a performance but a caricature.

It was a specialized business, but it isn't any longer. Comedians and impressionists used to be two different showbiz animals entirely, but now there's no such thing as a comedian who doesn't do impressions. How did that happen? Simple: The advent of the VCR and other technology that allows people to repeat film and television clips endlessly. Want to learn how to do an imitation of someone? Try this: Download a clip from YouTube, put it on a loop and then watch it 500 times. After the 200th time, even someone who is unable to distinguish between the voices of Barry White and Tiny Tim will be able to do a creditable version of what he's been viewing. And if you have enough patience to make it through 500 viewings, you will be the second coming of Rich Little—at least where that one person you're imitating is concerned.

It's strange. Now that it's easier than ever for performers to do impressions, and now that your accountant regales you at the beginning of your tax session with his imitation of Jack Nicholson in *The Departed*, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has decided that the highest form of acting is impersonation.

It's hard to fathom this change, but I'll hazard a guess that it has something to do with the increasing discomfort so many people seem to feel in making judgments. It's discrimination to be discriminating these days, and people are grateful for any kind of objective standard by which to judge a thing. The objective standard for an impression is the memory or idea of the person being impersonated. Since we know what Ray Charles looked and sounded like, there's no difficulty in declaring Jamie Foxx's version of Ray Charles an uncanny likeness.

What Helen Mirren does in *The Queen* is something a little different—she gives us an Elizabeth we've never been privy to, the woman as she lives her life out of the public eye. And yet even here her magnificent performance is given added resonance by the fact that we bring our knowledge and image of the woman she's imitating to bear in judging Mirren's work. When we listen to Elizabeth in bed with Prince Philip, alluding to her son's criticism of her as a mother, we aren't only thinking, "Yes, that's just how it would be with my mother," but rather, "Yes, that's probably exactly what Queen Elizabeth would be like in that situation."

The movies have been overtaken by special effects. And what is a great impression anyway but a kind of human special effect? ♦

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

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Parody

France's government proposed forming a union with Britain in 1956, and also discussed joining the Commonwealth. . . . Citing documents in the National Archives, the BBC said Prime Minister Guy Mollet of France had discussed the possibility of a merger between the countries with Sir Anthony Eden, the British prime minister at the time.

—Associated Press, January 15, 2007

DOMINION OF CANADA

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
OTTAWA

15 December 1958

His Excellency Kwame Nkrumah
President and National Redeemer
Republic of Ghana
Accra

My Dear Dr. Nkrumah,

May I thank you very much indeed for your kind letter of 8 December, in which you propose the political union of our two nations. Your generous comments about Canada are very much appreciated and will not be soon forgotten.

What you propose, Dr. Nkrumah, is very interesting and potentially historic. But of course, while the ties between West Africa and North America are of long and intimate duration, there is no escaping the fact that a merger of our two great sovereign nations will require much reflection and consultation, in both official and unofficial circles, on both sides of the Atlantic. In the meantime, I can certainly assure you that the prospective name you suggest for this remarkable joint venture—the Blessed, Eternal, and Bilateral Republic of Canaghanada—has met with much favorable comment here, as has your proposal that our two capital cities be renamed Accrottawa I and Accrottawa II. I might also mention that our senior civil servants are much impressed with your wise idea of locating the seat of government in North America during the summer months, and in Africa during the winter months. As you say, this will make "the guidance of the Masses" and "punishment of traitorous devils" considerably more comfortable and convenient than it is under the present arrangements.

Nevertheless, Dr. Nkrumah, we cannot be too hasty in contemplating an undertaking of such national importance and strategic magnitude. For instance, while it may be true, as you say, that Canada brings to this potential merger "little more than igloos and ice hockey players," it is not clear that Ghana's abundance of plantains, yams, sorghum, and coconuts

the weekly Standard
February 5, 2007

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